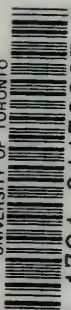


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THE CONFESSION  
OF A  
SINNER







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THE  
CONFESSION OF A SINNER,  
TRANSLATED  
FROM THE SPANISH OF  
DR. CONSTANTINO PONCE DE LA FUENTE,  
A REFORMER OF THE XVI CENTURY.

BY  
JOHN T. BETTS.

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH  
BY  
BENJAMIN B. WIFFEN.



LONDON:  
BELL AND DALDY, YORK STREET,  
COVENT GARDEN.  
1869.

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CHISWICK PRESS:—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,  
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE



## PREFACE.

**A**MONGST the martyrs of the religious reformation in Spain of the sixteenth century, Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente stands pre-eminent in learning, eloquence, station, and character. He was of noble family, and was court chaplain and preacher to Charles V. He occupied the pulpit of the Cathedral of Seville with the greatest acceptance, at a time when the new doctrines, that is, Scriptural doctrines, were beginning to be made plain and popular, by expositions in the vulgar tongue, in style so simple as to be within the comprehension of the people.

The CONFESSION OF A PENITENT SINNER, drawn evidently from his own experience, is, of his

small treatises, that which has been most noticed and praised. It has commanded the admiration of three successive martyrologists,<sup>1</sup> for so sublime are its sentiments, so profound and searching is its self examination, that it can hardly be perused without gaining a place for itself in every reader's conscience.

About the month of June, in the year 1567, a Spanish refugee for the cause of religion came to England from the Netherlands, driven hither by the "troubles at Antwerp," where he had been preacher to a French congregation of Protestants. He came here, not without observation, for De Quadra, the Spanish Ambassador in London, reported his arrival to his government at Madrid, describing him as squint-eyed, "*tuerto de un ojo.*" His name was Antonio del Coro or Corranus. He was a man of talent, and attracted the patronage of the Earl of Leicester, who got him the ap-

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<sup>1</sup> Rabo in German, Crespin in Latin, Goulart in French. Gerdes in his *Miscellanea Groningana*, vol. vi. part i., reprints the "Confession," after Goulart, in French, but so fused together in its style and order, that its distinctive character is sacrificed.



pointment of Divinity Reader in the Temple, and afterwards that of Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, a station he occupied however not without controversy. He brought over with him a little book written by himself in French, and printed at Antwerp, addressed to his sovereign, Philip II. He presented it to Bishop Parker for the improvement of his daughters in reading French. This little work<sup>1</sup> is now found in the Library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, and from it we ascertain how valuable is the authority of his contemporary, Raimundo Gonzales de Montes.

Antonio del Coro, when treating of the circumstances attending the prosecution of the celebrated preacher, Dr. Juan Gil, or Egidius, by the Inquisition at Seville, relates his own conversion to Protestantism from information

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<sup>1</sup> Lettre envoyée à la Maïesté du Roy des Espaignes, &c.—Nostre Sire. Par laquelle vn sien très humble subiect lui rend raison de son departement du Royaume d'Espaigne, &c. Signed at the end of the volume:—Escripte en vostre ville d'Anuers le 15 de Mars, l'An 1567, par vostre très humble et loyal rassall et très affectionné à faire seruice à vostre royale Ma<sup>te</sup>. ANTOINE DU CORRAN. Sm. 8vo. 91 fol. 182 pp.

derived from conversation with Raimundo Gonzales de Montes, who was Fiscal of the Inquisition itself, in the following extract :—

“The false accusations and calumnies continued for the space of two years [1549-1550], during which poor Dr. Juan Gil endured divers afflictions, imprisonments, and other torments of body and mind. Every time that I heard speak of his afflictions, I found them very just and equitable; and the mere repetition of his name made my hair stand on end when I heard say that he was a *heretic*, one who preached Martin Luther’s doctrine, and the sworn enemy of the Roman Pontiff. I continued in this ignorance (not being however in the least personally hostile to him), until one of the Inquisitors, who conducted his process, began to complain to me of the iniquity and injustice of his associates in many things pertaining to their office, and especially in reference to the above named Dr. Juan Gil, whom he esteemed as a truly worthy person, a Christian of better life than any of those who stood forth as his adversaries, notwithstanding they were doctors in theology and men of repute. Likewise, that

he knew well from what haunt such calumnies and false accusations proceeded, and that if the monks had not been upheld by the protection of some great prelate [Fernando de Valdés, Inquisitor-General] who interfered in everything, it would have been impossible for them to have had the hardihood to degrade so great a personage, whom his Imperial Majesty would fain have had elected bishop. In reference to this, the above-named Inquisitor<sup>1</sup> told me on the spot of many cruelties which the Holy Office of the Inquisition practises upon those whom they have in their hands, of which it is very necessary your Majesty [Philip II.] should be informed, in order that you, Sire, may know that "it is not all gold that glitters," and that the external majesty and pomp of the office of the Inquisition, which is called *holy*, has of nothing so little as of holiness. This excellent person said that he had for a long time left the duties of his office on this account, and in order that he might not be mixed up in them, save in the adjudication of some things ;

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<sup>1</sup> We suppose this to have been R. G. de Montes.

for he but retained the name and authority of his office, to the intent that he might be able to assist and favour many who otherwise would have been tyrannously treated by his associates, who,' he said, 'are so bold, and divested

of all Christian conscience, that  
 An Inquisitor discovers the faults of his associates, they sentence and condemn individuals whilst wholly uninformed of their accusation. As in this

present example, I see,' said he, 'that in the cause of Dr. Juan Gil we are so exceedingly ignorant, that we cannot distinguish between truth and error; and for that reason we are constrained to call in monks, to draw the line between heresy and truth, and to tender us their counsel, which we however see is biased and swayed by a wrathful envious spirit against this worthy personage, who, if he be, as they say, *a heretic, I am one likewise*. For I verily believe that what he preaches is the true word of God; and his good and holy life, corresponding with his doctrine, confirms me in this opinion. For in all this city [Seville] there is not a preacher who so evinces his piety and religion by his outward actions, as does this Dr. Juan Gil, who employs all his property

and ecclesiastical income in true benevolence and in works of charity.’

“Sire, to tell you the truth, when I heard these statements from the mouth of such a personage, both discreet and conscientious, I was extremely scandalized; for they were spoken against persons whom I held to be, and whom I almost adored, as pillars and columns of the Christian faith, as highly just and equitable judges, placed at the head of our church. Considering, however, the authority of the man who spoke, and his personal affection to me,—considering also, that so distinguished a person, both an eye-witness and of great experience, was fully entitled to speak upon such matters, I made it a subject of profound consideration. And having done this,

I begged *him* to shew me the accusations made against Dr. Juan

Del mōte sale  
quien el monte  
quema.

Gil and the theological definitions given by the monks in reference to him. With this request the Inquisitor complied very readily, and shewed me besides Dr. Juan Gil’s apologies and the replies thereto.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Lettre envoyée a la Maiesté du Roy des Espaignes, &c.

The proverb, "Del monte sale quien el monte quema," on the margin of Corranus' book, printed in 1567, the same year that R. G. de Montes' work, "Sanctæ Inquisitionis, Hispanicæ"<sup>1</sup> appeared, points out in a covert manner his proper name; for although Corranus's book is printed in French, he puts this marginal note, "He comes forth from the mountain, whom the mountain burns" in Spanish, as though he desired the reference to be seen and understood by De Montes himself, and no doubt it was so.

It appears evident that not one but two persons, both Spaniards, refugees from the prisons of the Inquisition at Seville, completed this work of De Montes; one writing it first in Spanish, the other translating it afterwards into Latin, for it reveals in its construction the peculiar idiom of a Spaniard's Latin. Having to publish it in Germany, in order that all might know "the Inquisitorial abomination of

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<sup>1</sup> Sanctæ Inquisitionis Hispanicæ Artes aliquot detectæ ac palam traductæ, etc. REGINALDO GONSALVIO, *Montano authore*. Heidelbergæ, MDLXVII., sm. 8vo., 16 leaves and 297 pages.

desolation," it was indispensable that it should be printed in Latin, the only general language known to all educated readers of that period. To have printed the original Spanish would have been costly, difficult, and at that period unnecessary. That it was first *written* in Spanish we learn from Joachim Beringer's preface to the German version, printed at Amberg, 1611, where he says, "*Von welcher Inquisition gegenwertiges Büchlein, durch einen Gottseligen führnemen Mann Reginaldum Gonsalvium in hispanischer Sprach trewlick beschrieben, deres selbstn mit augen angesehen, und durch glaubwürdige Zeugen darvon berichtet worden,*" &c. ; "of which Inquisition the present little book, faithfully written in the *Spanish language* by a pious and distinguished man, Reginaldum Gonsalvium, of the things of which he was an *eye witness*, and of which he was informed by trustworthy witnesses."

When de Montes' work appeared, it was immediately translated into Dutch, French, German, and English. How eagerly it was received and read will be seen by the following List.

## LIST OF TRANSLATIONS AND EDITIONS.

*Latin.*

1. Sanetæ Inquisitionis Hispanicæ, 8vo., Heidelbergæ, 1567.
2. De Inquisitione Hispanicæ Oratiunculæ septem, 8vo., Heidelbergæ, 1603.
3. Hispanicæ Inquisitionis, etc., edit. Joachim Ursinus, 8vo., Ambergæ, 1611.
4. Inquisitionis Hispanicæ, 8vo., Matriti, 1857.

*German.*

5. Inquisitio Hispanica, by Wolfgang Kauffman, 4to., Eisleben, 1569.
6. Der Heiligen Hispanischen Inquisition. Another translation, 4to., Heidelberg, 1569.
7. Der Tyrannischen Hispanischen Inquisition, the same as No. 6, edited by Joachim Beringer, 8vo., Amberg, 1611.

*Dutch.*

8. De Heylighe Spaense Inquisitie, 12mo., London, 1569.
9. Der heyligher Hispanischer Inquisitie. Another translation, 12mo., Amsterdam, 1569.



10. The same translation as No. 9, 4to., S'Gravenhage, 1620.
11. Historie van de Spaensche Inquisitie. Another translation from the French, No. 12, 8vo., s. l., 1569.

*French.*

12. Histoire de l'Inquisition d'Espagne, [abridged], 8vo., s. l., 1568.

*English.*

13. A Discovery and playne Declaration, &c. translated by Vincent Skinner, 4to., London, 1568.
14. A Discovery and playne Declaration, &c. translated by Vincent Skinner, 4to., London, 1569.
15. A fyll, ample and pvnctvall Discovery, &c. translated by Vincent Skinner, 4to., London, 1625.

*Spanish.*

16. Artes de la Inquisizion Española,<sup>1</sup> 8vo., s. l. 1851.

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<sup>1</sup> Reformistas Antiguos Espanoles, tomo 5º.

Raimundo Gonzales de Montes or Montanus was, we find, an inhabitant of Seville, contemporary with the events which he recites, and personally acquainted with the individuals there, whose unhappy destiny he records. His book is therefore worthy of the highest confidence for its veracity. Besides this, as we have mentioned, he was himself one of the Inquisitors, or rather a Fiscal or Qualificator of the Holy Office, and, in consequence of his position, intimately knew all the secret proceedings of the institution. De Montes was a man whose mind was alive to truth and justice, and when the proceedings of the Inquisition took a more active course under Fernando de Valdés, the Inquisitor-General, his generous disposition caused him to be sensible of the cruel injustice of that dread tribunal which he was employed to serve. He, however, continued in his office for some time using his influence to protect, or to suggest the best modes of defence for the unfortunate prisoners. This was between the years 1551 and 1556.

Dr. M'Crie has mainly derived his account of Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente from

R. G. de Montes' work, adding a few incidents from Cypriano de Valera and Gerdes. What he has done he has done well, and we have literally used his language in several of our pages, having de Montes at the same time before us, interspersing M'Crie's modern language with a few passages from the quaint English translation of De Montes by Vincent Skinner, who was clerk to the Council of Queen Elizabeth. Of the three editions of his translation, that of 1569 is the best, having, when found complete, a folding plate of the procession at an Auto de Fé, and seven registers or short lists of the names of prisoners, with some particulars about them not found in the earlier and later editions.

Much information respecting the Spanish religious reformers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries can now be acquired, which was hidden from Dr. M'Crie for want of their works, unknown to him at the time he wrote his "Reformation," but now made accessible. His work however is still valuable, and he who would enter upon the inquiry cannot do better than take his "History of the Progress and Sup-

pression of the Reformation in Spain" for his text book, and follow it up by careful examination of the prefaces and notes to the "Reformistas Antiguos Españoles," a series of twenty volumes.

BENJAMIN B. WIFFEN.





BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF  
DR. CONSTANTINO PONCE  
DE LA FUENTE.

**D**R. CONSTANTINO PONCE DE LA FUENTE was perhaps the most earnest and distinguished divine and preacher of his day in Spain. He was Canon Magestral of the Cathedral of Seville. So renowned was he for his eloquence and virtuous character that an ancient Spanish writer, personally conversant with him, speaks of him in terms of the highest praise, thus quaintly rendered, by an old author, in English :<sup>1</sup>—"How can I denise to sound thy prayes sufficiently,

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<sup>1</sup> Vincent Skinner in his translation of R. G. Montanus, "A discovery and playne Declaration of sundry subtile practises of the Holy Inquisition," &c., ed. 1569, fol. 91*b*, 92.

being the most famous Diuine of any that hath liued in our dayes, and one whome God of his abundant gracious goodnes, did indue so plentifully with so rare qualities, as hardly are to be sene together agayne in one man, so that well they may be wondered at, but never valued to their worth? It is a strange matter, and almost incredible and yet true that I will report of him, for I am able to iustifie it: that of many thousands of men that haue vewed this man's qualities thorowly, there was never any, but eyther loued him passingly, or els hated him spitefully. Therefore as he was ordeyned to be both beloued and hated with extremitie; so had he many malicious enemies, and as many earnest frends and fauourers. And heere I comprehend not vnder the name of frends, such as he himselfe bare good will vnto, more than I accompt those men among the number of his foes to whome he wished euill; but onely such as he knew not, and yet they with all their harts both loued and honoured him."

Dr. Constantino was a native of San Clemente, in the diocese of Cuenca, New Castile.<sup>1</sup> He was born about the year 1500, contem-

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<sup>1</sup> Antonii Bibl. Hisp. Nov., tom. i. p. 256.

porary with the twin brothers Alfonso and Juan de Valdés, his fellow reformers, who were natives of the city of Cuenca. "Possessing a good taste and a love of genuine knowledge," writes M'Crie,<sup>1</sup> deriving his information strictly from R. G. de Montes or Montanus, "he [Dr. Constantino] evinced an early disgust for the barbarous pedantry of the schools, and attachment to such of his countrymen as sought to revive the study of polite letters. Being intended for the Church, he made himself master of [Latin] Greek, and Hebrew,<sup>2</sup> to qualify him for interpreting the Scriptures. At the same time he spoke and wrote his native language with uncommon purity and elegance. Like Erasmus, with whose writings he was first captivated, he was distinguished for his lively wit, which he took pleasure in indulging at the expense of foolish preachers and hypocritical monks. But he was endowed with greater

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<sup>1</sup> History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Spain in the Sixteenth Century, by Thomas M'Crie, D.D., 1829, p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Montanus says "that he became so distinguished, by his own study without any teacher, in the languages, Latin Greek, and Hebrew, that he alone had been sufficiently able to restore them to us if they had been lost."

firmness and decision of character than the philosopher of Rotterdam. During his attendance at the University, his youthful spirit had betrayed him into irregularities, of which his enemies afterwards took an ungenerous advantage. In his "Confessions of a Sinner," he speaks of these irregularities in the language of deep contrition:—"Ruin charmed me, I rushed to perdition, surrendering Thy blessings to be squandered and dissipated as though I impersonated ruin, and ruin impersonated me. I leagued with all Thy enemies, O Lord, as though Thy blessings were conferred upon me on the condition of reiterated apostasy from Thee. I shut my eyes, I closed my ears, and I obstructed my senses to the perception that I was in Thy temple, that the heaven that lighted me was Thine, and Thine the earth by which I lived; that, disavowing and acting treacherously to Thy goodness, I stole all that I enjoyed, shamelessly repudiating Thy mercy and insolently defying Thy justice. And thus I slept as securely as though I had been intent upon Thy service, and had applied everything to the end to which Thou hadst given them me."

These irregularities were succeeded by the utmost decorum and correctness of manners,



though he always retained his gay temper, and could never deny himself the gratification of his jest.

Notwithstanding the opportunities he had of enriching himself, he was so exempt from avarice that his library, which he valued above all his property, was never large. His eloquence caused his services in the pulpit to be much sought after; but he was free from vanity, the besetting sin of orators, and scorned to prostitute his talents at the shrine of popularity. He declined the office of preacher in the Cathedral of Cuenca, which was offered him by the unanimous vote of the Chapter. When the more honourable and lucrative office of preacher to the metropolitan church of Toledo was afterwards offered to him, after thanking the Chapter for their good opinion, he declined it also, alleging as a reason "that he would not disturb the bones of their ancestors;" alluding to a dispute between them and the Archbishop Siliceo, who had insisted that his clergy should prove the purity of their descent.

Whether it was predilection for the reformed opinions that induced Dr. Constantino at first to fix his residence at Seville is uncertain, but

it is clear that he co-operated in his early labours with Dr. Juan Gil or Egidius of that city.

Dr. Juan Gil had been educated at the University of Alcala de Henares, where the study of the Scriptures had received an impetus from the printing of the Polyglot Bible of Cardinal Ximenes, who, by this admirable labour of his vanity, afterwards prepared many heretics for the fires of the Inquisition, at its Autos-de-Fé; he distinguished himself by his skill in scholastic theology, the only science then valued in Spain, except among a few individuals, who, because they addicted themselves to the study of the Scriptures in the original languages, were derisively named Biblists.

Instructed by one of these Biblists, named Rodrigo Valer, Dr. Juan Gil soon became aware of the defects of his preaching, originating in his following the scholastics of Aquinas and Scotus, and therefore he applied himself to the most effectual remedy, a serious perusal of the Bible itself. His profiting became manifest to every one. He soon became the most acceptable preacher in Seville, and he was early joined by a Dr. Vargas, as well

as by Dr. Constantino, both of whom had been his fellow-students at Alcala, all of them being men of superior talents and learning. These three friends, united by their common faith, concerted a plan, by means of which they might co-operate to advance the cause of pure religion. Dr. Vargas read lectures to the more learned, wherein he expounded the Epistle to the Romans and, subsequently, the Book of Psalms, in which Dr. Constantino assisted him, while Dr. Juan Gil exercised his superior eloquence in the pulpit. Their zeal awakened the suspicions and provoked the diligence of the clergy, who were devoted to the ancient superstition; and the city was divided, in its attachments, between the two classes of preachers.<sup>1</sup>

The Inquisition was not long before it fixed its jealous eyes on the three teachers of the new doctrines, nor were there wanting persons ready to accuse them, and especially Dr. Juan Gil, who was most obnoxious on account of his greater openness of disposition, and his appearing more frequently in the pulpit. The Emperor Charles V., attracted by his great reputation, nominated him, in 1550, to the

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<sup>1</sup> M'Crie, after R. G. De Montes.

vacant bishopric of Tortosa, which was one of the richest benefices in Spain, and which had been held by Cardinal Adrian, his preceptor, immediately before his elevation to the papal chair as Adrian VI. This mark of royal favour inflamed the resentment of his adversaries, and determined them to denounce him to the Holy Office, which, having taken the preliminary steps, threw him into one of its secret prisons. The charges against him related to the doctrine of justification, assurance of salvation, human merits, plurality of mediators, purgatory, auricular confession, and the worshipping of images. The greatest interest was used for his liberation, the Emperor himself wrote in his favour to the Inquisitor-General; the Chapter of Seville did the same; while the Licentiate Correa, one of the most inexorable judges of the Holy Office, became, strange to say, an advocate for him. In consequence of this intercession, the Inquisitors found it necessary to adopt a moderate course, and agreed to submit the articles of charge to two arbiters chosen by them and by Dr. Juan Gil himself. Sentence was given forth, declaring him strongly suspected of the Lutheran heresy, and condemning him to an act of abjuration, to be

imprisoned three years, to abstain from writing or teaching for ten years, and not to leave the kingdom during that period under pain of death. Confounded at the unexpected issue of the process, abashed by the exultation of his enemies, he lost his courage and silently acquiesced in the sentence pronounced against him. It was not until after he had returned to his prison that he learned from one of his friends the base treachery of the advocate to whom he had confided his cause. He appeared among the criminals condemned to penance in an Auto-de-Fé celebrated at Seville in 1552. The term of his imprisonment expired in 1555. In the course of the following year he paid a visit to Valladolid, where he found a number of converts to the reformed doctrines, with whom his wounded spirit was refreshed, by what he saw of the grace of God in that city. After spending a short time in the company of his brethren and exhorting them to constancy, he returned to Seville, but the fatigue of travel to which he had been unaccustomed brought on a fever that terminated his life in a few days. His bones were afterwards taken from their grave, and committed to the flames, and his property confiscated by

a sentence of the Inquisition.<sup>1</sup> Prior to this Dr. Vargas had died, whilst Dr. Constantino had been sent to the Low Countries, and hence could not have been at Seville when his friend Dr. Juan Gil expired.

As early as the year 1545 Dr. Constantino, while yet at Seville, had printed and published, with the approbation of the Censors, under a license or permission, a book entitled "*Summa de Doctrina Christiana*," with "*El Sermon de Christo nuestro Redemptor en el monte*," which appears to have met with ready acceptance, as is shown by a license for this and four other of his works, dated August 22, 1548, and another edition of the "*Summa de Doctrina Christiana*," issued in 1551. One of these works was found on the Imperial bookshelf in the Monastery of Yuste,<sup>2</sup> where the Emperor Charles V. retired to pass the close of his days free from the cares of state.

The Emperor, when on a visit to Seville, was so much pleased with a sermon he heard Dr. Constantino preach, that he immediately

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<sup>1</sup> M'Crie, after R. G. De Montes, pp. 154—160, 169, ed. 1829.

<sup>2</sup> Stirling's "*Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V.*" ed. 1852, p. 173, after Sandoval II. 829.

named him one of his chaplains, to which he added the office of almoner ; and he soon after appointed him to accompany his son Philip to Flanders, "to let the Flemings see that Spain was not destitute of polite scholars and orators." Dr. Constantino made it a point of duty to obey the orders of his sovereign, and reluctantly quitted his residence in Seville, for which he had hitherto rejected the most tempting offers.

The young Prince Philip embarked on the 2nd of November, 1548, at Castellon de la Plana, situate north of Valencia on the Mediterranean coast, on board the *Divicia*, a galley of Prince Doria's. The day previous, that is, on the 1st of November, when the feast of All Saints was celebrated, the Prince attended mass at the principal church. Dr. Constantino performed the divine service with great solemnity, and preached a very remarkable sermon, as he was always accustomed to do. The embarkation occurred in as stormy and tempestuous a winter as was ever known. The sermon which the Doctor had preached the day before,—and on so solemn an occasion, which had been greatly applauded,—no doubt was but a prelude to other sermons which he preached during the

season of Lent. Afterwards he delivered similar sermons before Philip, while this Prince was making his progress through Flanders and Holland, dominions in which he was going to succeed his royal father; while, in every chief city of those provinces, the Prince, as he journeyed, swore in clear and strong terms the most positive oaths, to observe and maintain the rights, laws, and liberties of his subjects.<sup>1</sup> Some ten years after, the motives and sincerity of both persons were manifested; Dr. Constantino, the preacher, "the great philosopher and profound theologian, the most distinguished in the pulpit and for his eloquence that had appeared for a long time, as the books he had written very clearly show," died, martyred, in the prisons of the Inquisition, for his manner of understanding and for his love to the Gospel; Philip II. the king, faithless to all his oaths and professions, and to every law of humanity, continued to occupy himself with all zest in ordering slaughter, in burning, and in persecution everywhere, of all who did not think in matters of religion as he himself said and

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<sup>1</sup> Juan Christoval Calvete de Estrella. *Viaje del Principe*, &c. Anvers, 1552, fol.



thought. So different were the results of that companionship.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Constantino's journey gave him the opportunity of becoming personally acquainted with some of the German Reformers. Among these are James Schopper, a learned man of Biberach in Suabia, by whose conversation his views of evangelical doctrine were greatly enlarged and confirmed. Another remarkable character, whose acquaintance will have had its influence upon his religious views, was Francisco de Enzinas, surnamed Dryander, the first translator of the New Testament into Spanish from the Greek, 1543, a native of Burgos, whose relatives had settled at Antwerp and were engaged there in commerce. Enzinas had dedicated his book to the Emperor Charles V. He presented it to him in person while he sat at table after dinner at Brussels; the Emperor handed it to his Confessor, who speedily had him cast into prison, from which, after fifteen months' confinement, he unexpectedly escaped, and was now safely residing at Strasburg.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reformistas Antiguos Españoles, tome xix. p. 450—452.

<sup>2</sup> Memoires de Francisco de Enzinas, 1543, par. Ch. Al. Campan. Bruxelles, 1862, 8vo. Latin and French. The

The intercourse between Enzinas and Dr. Constantino is shown by two unpublished autograph letters in the archives of the Protestant seminary, Strasburg, in which the writer asks Enzinas to give him a letter of introduction to Dr. Constantino, and afterwards informs Enzinas of the friendly reception the Doctor gave him in consequence.

“Spires, 26th August, 1550.

“Gaspar Nidbruck to Francisco de Enzinas, Strasburg.

[Among other things mentioned he writes]

“Wherefore I respectfully ask you, for our friendship’s sake, that you should write to Dr. Constantino on my behalf, telling him of my associations, both local and personal. You need not mention the topic of religion; and without your engaging me to much, by your promises, you may affirm this, that whatever he shall communicate to me, will be entrusted to a confidential person, one attached to men of faith and piety. Were you disposed to

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narrative was written in Latin by Enzinas at the request of Melanethon, and is full of interest. Foxe, the martyrologist, says: “I read it in Latine, the book [MS.] remaining in the hands of John Oporinus, at Basil.

confer with him upon your own affairs, that would be best done by your informing him of them when I shall be at Augsburg, for I shall easily ascertain how he is affected towards pure Evangelical doctrine, and how he is affected towards you, as also what others think of you; for I will diligently fish out, *expiscabor*, all these things, and will take care to have them transmitted to you at Strasburg through the Strasburg delegates. This is my advice, which notwithstanding I submit to your judgment, that in the letters you send to me, you do not speak over-precisely or definitely about religion to Dr. Constantino (as is becoming to you and all pious persons), but that you write to him only in a friendly commendation of me, according to your usual kindness, and doubt not that you will always find in me a faithful and diligent correspondent. [Agent] . . . &c.

“GASPAR NIDBRUCK.”

Gaspar Nidbruck, in another letter written from Augsburg, 8th of October, 1550, to Francisco de Enzinas, at Strasburg, says:—

“Thy letter of recommendation also had no little weight with the venerable man, Dr. Constantino, since he received me with great

friendliness, and what with his wisdom and learning I doubt not that he will be able, assisted by your counsel, to promote what I have proposed, which he promised that he would do, and I do not mistrust his good will. . . .

And further on, in the same letter, he writes :—

“Dr. Constantino most earnestly desires thee to return to thy family, or, at least, to settle in the Netherlands, at Antwerp. I ask thee to reply to his letter on this subject. If thou writest again send the letter to the Legate of Strasburg by a sure messenger. I will ask the Legate to place the letters in my hands, or that he cause them to be delivered to Dr. Constantino himself, sending them to him by his servant; should I have already left this place [Brussels] . . . &c.

“GASPAR NIDBRUCK.”

Enzinas had been imprisoned at Brussels from 1543 to 1545 for printing his New Testament in the Spanish language, as before mentioned, and, although he could confide in Dr. Constantino, he was too cautious to be likely to trust himself again at Antwerp with his relatives there, whom he well knew had not

power to screen him from the designs of the Inquisition, were it to get him a second time in its hands.

While Dr. Constantino remained in the Netherlands he availed himself of the opportunity to print another edition of his "*Summa de Doctrina Christiana*," and of his "*Doctrina Christiana*." Of this latter only the first part, on the Articles of Faith, appeared in 1554. His "*Catecismo Christiano*," with the "*Confession d'un Pecador penitente*" annexed to it, appeared also at Antwerp, in 1556, in small octavo.<sup>1</sup>

In 1555 Dr. Constantino returned to Seville, and his presence imparted a new impulse to the Protestant cause in that city. A benevolent and enlightened individual of the name of Escobar, after conference with Dr. Constantino, founded a Professorship of Divinity in the College of Doctrine, (*Colegio de Doctrina*), an institution established at Seville for the education of the children of the nobility; in which Dr. Juan Perez, the translator of the New Testament of 1556, then held the degree of Doctor

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of this edition exists in the Royal Library at Brussels.

of Divinity. Dr. Constantino was appointed to the Chair as Lecturer. By means of the lectures which he read on the Scriptures, together with the instructions of Fernando de St. Juan, Provost of the institution, the minds of many of the young men were opened to the truth.<sup>1</sup> On the first Lent after his return to Seville, he was chosen by the Chapter to preach every alternate day in the Cathedral. So great was his popularity, that though the public service did not begin till eight o'clock in the morning, yet when he preached, so eager were the people to hear him that the church was filled by four and even by three o'clock. Having but recently recovered from a fever when he commenced his labours, he felt so weak that it was necessary for him repeatedly to pause during the sermon, on which occasions he was allowed to recruit his strength by taking a draught of wine in the pulpit; a permission which had never been granted to any other preacher. He began his lectures with the Proverbs of Solomon; followed by Ecclesiastes, and the Canticles; after these he pro-

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<sup>1</sup> "A Discovery and Playne Declaration," &c., by Reginaldus Gonsalvius Montanus, 1569, fol. 94.

ceeded with the book of Job, and expounded more than half of it. All these lectures were carefully taken down by one of his devoted hearers, whom De Montes denotes, or conceals under the anagram of Bab.<sup>1</sup> De Montes asserts that he himself possessed these manuscripts, and that he only waited to find leisure to publish them, for, as he says, "they exceeded all that had been written hitherto on these subjects." This course of lectures on Job was interrupted midway by difficulties and contentions that now arose around him on all sides to thwart him.

There are three Canonries in every episcopal church in Spain, which must be obtained by competitive trials. These are chiefly filled by Fellows belonging to the six Colegios Mayores, who form a kind of learned aristocracy, which has long possessed great influence in that country. Fellows in orders, who possess abilities, are kept in reserve for the literary competitions; such as cannot appear to advantage in these trials are provided through court favour with stalls in the wealthier Cathedrals,

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<sup>1</sup> R. G. Montano, *Sanctæ Inquisitionis Hispanicæ*, p. 283. "*Reformistas Antiguos Hispanici*," tomo xiii.

while the absolutely dull and ignorant are placed in the tribunals of the Inquisition, where, passing judgment in their secret halls, they may not, by their blunders, disgrace the Colleges to which they belong.

The post of Canon Magéstral in Seville having become vacant by the death of Dr. Juan Gil, the Chapter, in accordance with the general wish of the city, fixed their eyes upon Dr. Constantino, as the person most fitted by his talents for filling that important office. Dr. Juan Gil had been introduced into it without engaging in the literary competition; but in consequence of his unpopularity when he first ascended the pulpit, the Canons had entered on their records a resolution that the usual trials should take place in all future elections. Dr. Constantino had uniformly ridiculed these literary jousts, as resembling the exercises of school-boys and the tricks of jugglers. Finding him obstinate in refusing to enter the lists, the Chapter were inclined to dispense with their resolution. But Fernando de Valdés, the Archbishop of Seville and Inquisitor-General, a man

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of the Colegios Mayores, see Doblado's *Letters from Spain* ed. 1825, pp. 90-100.



“magnificent to the Church, and mean to all the rest of the world, profligate, selfish and bigoted, with some refinement of taste and much dignity of manner, a fair specimen of the great ecclesiastic of the sixteenth century,”<sup>1</sup> who had conceived a strong dislike to Dr. Constantino on account of a supposed injury which he had received from him when he was preacher to the Emperor, interposed his authority to prevent the suspension of the rule. A day was accordingly fixed for the trial, and notices were published in all the principal cities requiring candidates to make their appearance. The friends of Dr. Constantino now pressed him to lay aside his scruples; and one of them represented so strongly the services which he might render to the cause of truth in so influential a situation, and the hurtful effects which would result from its being occupied by some noisy and ignorant declaimer, that he consented at last to offer himself as a candidate. Two individuals came forward from a distant part of the country; one of them however declined the contest as soon as he became acquainted with

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<sup>1</sup> Stirling's *Cloister Life of the Emperor Charles V.*, ed. 1852, p. 104.

the circumstances; but the other, a Canon of Malaga, instigated by the Archbishop, who wished to mortify his competitor, descended into the arena. Despairing, however, of his ability to succeed by polemical skill, or by interest with the Chapter, he had recourse to personal charges and insinuations, in which he was supported by all those, who envied the fame of Dr. Constantino, who had felt the sting of his satire, or who hated him for his friendship with Dr. Juan Gil. He was accused of having contracted a marriage before he entered into holy orders; it was alleged that there were irregularities in his ordination and in the manner in which he obtained his degree of Doctor of Divinity; and an attempt was made to fasten on him the charge of heresy. In spite of these accusations he carried his election, was installed in his new office, and commenced his duty as preacher in the Cathedral with great acceptance by the people. But this contest arrayed a party against him, which sought in every way to thwart his measures, and which afterwards found an opportunity to make him feel the weight of its vengeance.

The books that Dr. Constantino had already published, afforded a pretext for his enemies to

carry out their designs, characterized as they were by his earnest advocacy of sincerity of Christian piety. His work on "Christian Doctrine," of which the first part only had been published, was viewed with great suspicion by the ruling Clergy, who took occasion from it to circulate reports unfavourable to the author's orthodoxy, and who held secret consultations on the propriety of denouncing him to the Inquisition, where his principal adversary, the Inquisitor-General, Fernando de Valdés, sat as judge.

At this period the books introduced into Spain, from Geneva, by Julian Hernandez (el Pequeno), Juan Perez' amanuensis, were being privately distributed in the city among the infant church.<sup>1</sup> His accusers complained that Dr. Constantino had neither condemned the Lutheran errors nor vindicated the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome; and that, if at any time he mentioned indulgences, purgatory and human merit, instead of extolling them, he derogated from these authorized doctrines of the Church by warning his readers not to risk

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<sup>1</sup> A Discovery and Playne Declaration, by R. G. Montanus, 1569, fol. 95 b.

their salvation upon them. When these charges came to the ears of Dr. Constantino he contented himself with saying that these topics did not properly belong to the first part of his treatise, but that he would explain his views respecting them in his second volume, which he was preparing for the press. This reply, backed by his popularity, silenced his adversaries for that time.

The Inquisition having, by their Familiars, obtained particular information of the progress of the reformed principles by means of books, of private assemblies and of preaching, laid their plans with such ingenuity and secrecy that a great number of persons were seized both at Valladolid and at Seville. Among these were Dr. Constantino and De Montes, to whom we owe the record of these circumstances, who afterwards escaped from the overcrowding of the prisons. When information was conveyed to the Emperor Charles V. in his retirement at Yuste, that his favourite Chaplain and preacher was thrown into prison in the Castle of Triana, he exclaimed, "If Constantino be a heretic, he will prove a great one."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sandoval, *Historia del Emperador Carlos V.*, ii. p. 829.

The joy which the Inquisitors felt at obtaining possession of the person of a man whom they had long eyed with jealousy, was in no small degree abated by the difficulties which they found in the way of procuring his conviction. Knowing the perilous circumstances in which he was placed, he had for some time back exercised the utmost circumspection over his words and actions. His confidential friends were few. His penetration enabled him, with a single glance, to detect the traitor under his mask; and his knowledge of human nature kept him from committing himself to the weak though honest partisans of the reformed faith. When brought before his judges, he maintained his innocence, challenged the public prosecutor to show that he had done anything criminal, and repelled the charges brought against him with such ability and success as to throw his adversaries into the greatest perplexity. There was every probability that he would finally baffle their efforts to convict him of heresy, when an unforeseen occurrence obliged him to abandon the line of defence which he had hitherto pursued. Doña Isabella Martinez, a widow lady of respectability and opulence, had been thrown into prison as a suspected

heretic, and her property, as a matter of course, had been confiscated. The Inquisitors, being informed by the treachery of a servant in the family, that her son, Francisco Bertram had contrived, before the inventory was taken, to secrete certain coffers containing valuable effects, sent their alguazil, Luis Sotelo, to demand them. As soon as the alguazil entered the house, Bertram, in great trepidation, told him he knew his errand, and would deliver up what he wanted, on condition that he screened him from the vengeance of the Inquisition. Conducting the alguazil to a retired part of the building, and, breaking down a thin partition-wall, he disclosed a quantity of books which Dr. Constantino had deposited with Doña Isabella, for the purpose of security, some time before his imprisonment. Sotelo signified that these were not exactly what he was in search of, but that he would take charge of them, along with the coffers which he was instructed to carry to the Holy Office. Dazzling as were the jewels of Isabella Martinez, the eyes of the Inquisitors glistened still more at the sight of the books of Dr. Constantino. On examining them, they found, beside various heretical works, a volume in his own handwriting, in which the points of

controversy between the Church of Rome and the Protestants were discussed at considerable length. In it the author treated of the true Church according to the principles of Luther and of Calvin, and, by an application of the different marks which the Scriptures gave for discriminating it, shewed that the Papal Church had no claim to the title. In a similar way he decided the question respecting justification, the merit of good works, the sacraments, indulgences and purgatory; calling this last the wolf's head, and an invention of the monks to feed idle bellies.<sup>1</sup> When the volume was shewn to Dr. Constantino, he acknowledged at once that it was in his handwriting and that it contained his sentiments. "It is unnecessary for you," added he, "to produce further evidence; you have there a candid and full confession of my belief. I am in your hands; do with me as seemeth to you good."<sup>2</sup>

No arts or threatenings could prevail on him to give any information respecting his associates. With the view of inducing the other prisoners to plead guilty, the agents of the Holy

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<sup>1</sup> A Discovery and Playne Declaration, &c., by R. G. Montanus, fol. 96.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

Office circulated the report that he had informed against them, when put to the *question* (torture); and they even suborned witnesses to depose that they had heard his cries on the rack, though he was never delivered to that inhuman mode of examination. By what motives the judges were restrained from subjecting him to it is uncertain. It can only be conjectured that it proceeded from respect to the feelings of the Emperor; for soon after Charles' death Dr. Constantino was removed from the apartment which he had hitherto occupied, and thrust into a low, damp and noisome vault, where he endured more than his brethren did from the application of the engines of torture. Oppressed and worn out with a mode of living so different from what he had been used to, he was heard to exclaim, "O my God, were there no Scythians, or Cannibals, or Pagans still more savage, that Thou hast permitted me to fall into the hands of these baptized fiends?" His life would necessarily be cut short in such a situation. Putrid air and unwholesome diet, together with grief for the ruin of the Reformed cause in his native country, brought on dysentery, which put an end to his days, after he had been nearly two years in confinement.



Not satisfied with persecuting him when alive, his adversaries circulated the calumny that he had put an end to his own life by opening a vein with a piece of broken glass. Ballads, grounded on this fabricated story, and containing other slanders, were indecently hawked through the streets of Seville. Had there been the least foundation for this report of his having committed suicide, we may be sure the Inquisitors would have taken care to verify it, by ordering an inquest to be held on the body. But the calumny was refuted by the testimony of a young monk of San Isidro, named Fernandez, who being providentially confined in the same cell with Dr. Constantino, ministered to him during his sickness, and closed his eyes in peace.”<sup>1</sup>

The slanders which were at this time so industriously propagated against him only serve to show the anxiety of the Inquisitors to shroud his fame, and the dread which they felt lest the

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<sup>1</sup> Cypriano de Valera. *Dos Tratados*, ed. 1599, p. 251, and *Reformistas Antiguos Españoles*, tomo vi. 1851, p. 251, “esto sé del mismo que se halló presente á su muerte i le asistió á su enfermedad,” this I know from the person [Fernandez] himself, who waited upon him in his sickness and was present at his death.

Reformed opinions should gain credit from the circumstance of their having been embraced by a person of so great eminence and consideration. In this object however they did not succeed altogether to their wish. This appeared when his effigy and bones were brought out in the public Auto-de-Fé celebrated at Seville on the 22nd of December, 1560. The effigies of such heretics as had escaped from justice by flight or by death, usually consisted of a shapeless piece of patchwork surmounted by a head; that of Dr. Constantino consisted of a regular human figure, complete in all its parts, dressed after the manner in which he appeared in public, and representing him in his most common attitude of preaching, with one arm resting on the pulpit and the other elevated. The production of this figure in the spectacle, when his sentence was about to be read, excited a lively recollection of a preacher so popular, and drew from the spectators an expression of feeling by no means pleasing to the Inquisitors. In consequence of this they caused it to be withdrawn from the prominent situation which it occupied, and to be brought near to their own platform, where they commenced the reading of the articles of the libel on which Dr. Con-

stantino had been condemned. The people, displeased at this step, and not hearing what was read, began to murmur; upon which Calderon, who, as mayor of the city, presided on the occasion, desired the acting secretary to go to the pulpit usually provided for that part of the ceremony. This intimation being disregarded, the murmurs were renewed, and the mayor, raising his voice, ordered the service to be suspended. The Inquisitors were obliged to restore the effigy to its former place, and to recommence the reading of the sentence in the audience of the people; but the secretary was instructed, after naming a few of the errors into which the deceased had fallen, to conclude by saying, that he had vented other errors, so horrible and impious, that they could not be heard without pollution by vulgar ears. After this the effigy was sent to the house of the Inquisition, and another of ordinary construction was conveyed to the stake to be burnt, along with Dr. Constantino's bones.

The Inquisitors were not a little puzzled how to act respecting his works, which had already been printed with their approbation; but they at last agreed to prohibit them, "not because they had found anything in them worthy of

condemnation," as their sentence runs, "but because it was not fit that any honourable memorial for a man doomed to infamy should be transmitted to posterity."<sup>1</sup> They had a still more delicate task to perform, that is, to expurgate every passage that spoke of Dr. Constantino in the books of contemporary writers, which was most effectually executed, and a whole edition of Illescas' "Pontifical History," printed before 1573,<sup>2</sup> was strictly suppressed.

The following is a list of the editions of Dr. Constantino's works :—

- I A. SUMMA DE DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA SEVILLA,  
*not discovered* 1540 (?)
- B. SUMMA DE DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA compuesto  
por el Doctor Constantino.
- ¶ ITEM. El Sermon de CHRISTO nuestro  
Redemptor en el Monte, Traduzido en  
Castellano por el mismo Autor (the

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<sup>1</sup> M'Crie, pp. 267-9. R. G. Montanus, A Discovery and Playne Declaration, &c., 1569, fol. 92-93. Llorente ii. 278-9.

<sup>2</sup> Indice ultimo de los Libros prohibidos, Madrid, 1790, p. 141, col. 1. Indice General de los Libros prohibidos, Madrid, 1844, p. 173, col. 1. This comparatively recent edition of the Spanish Index, much enlarged, is little known in England.

devise of Hercules with the motto *Labor oña vincit*). *Todo agora de nuevo añadido y enmendado. Con priuilegio imperial.* Colofon. fol. clxxix.

¶ Deo gracias. ¶ *Fue Impressa en Seuilla en casa de Iuan de Leon. A sancta Maria de Gracia. Año de*  
1545

A copy of this edition is in the Royal Library at Brussels. B. L. sm. 8vo.

c. SUMMA DE doctrina Christiana. En q̃ se cõtiene todo lo principal y necessario q̃ el hõbre Christiano deue saber y obrar. Tambien el sermõ de christo nuestro redēptor en el monte. *Por el D. Constantino.* \*Con priuilegio\* (in an engraved architectural border). Colofon, fol. cexiii. vto.

*Fín de la summa de doctrina christiana compuesta por el doctor Constantino: impressa en Seuilla por Christonál aluarez. A xxviii. de março año de*  
1551

This edition is in possession of

Don Luis de Usoz i Rio. B. L. sm.  
8vo.

- D. Summa de doctrina Christiana, etc. etc.  
Decimo Anvers (?) 1551 (?)

This copy is in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. It is imperfect, wanting the title and colophon, if any; the leaves are numbered in folio, and the volume wants all between fol. 120 and fol. 155; it contains, like the Seville editions, *El Sermon del Señor en el mōte*. The first leaf of the volume contains a dedicatory epistle to Don Garcia de Loaysa, Cardinal de santa Susaña Arçobispo de Seuilla, who had been Confessor to Charles V. The book is printed in Roman letter, and a woodcut on the title of one of the pieces in it appears to be by a Flemish artist; these features lead us to believe that it was printed at Antwerp.

- II. EL SERMON QUE NUESTRO SEÑOR JESU  
CHRISTO HIZO EN EL MONTE. Tradu-  
zido en Castellano por el doctor Con-  
stantino.

This tract is found in the editions of the SUMMA DE DOCTRINA, No. 1,

editions *A. B. C.* and in No. 5, SUMA DE DOCTRINA, etc.

- III. A. DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA, EN QUE ESTA COMPREHENDIDA TODA la informacion que pertenece al hombre que quiere servir a Dios. Por el Doctor Constantino. Parte Primera Seuilla (?) fol. *not discovered before* 1549

This edition is mentioned in the Bibliotheca Anglicana, 1686, an auction catalogue of books at page 96. Libri Hispanici. Folio. DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA per (*por*) el Doctor Constantino, 1549. It is also alluded to by Montanus (*Raimundo Gonzalez de Montes*), in *Sanctæ Inquisitionis*, etc. ed. 1567, p. 294.

- B. Doctrina Christiana, en qve esta comprehendida toda la informacion que pertenece al hombre que quiere servir a Dios. *Por el Doctor Constantino.* PARTE PRIMERA de los articulos de la fe. (Device, a fountain and column with two doves ; and the motto, CONCORDIA RES PARVAE CRESCVNT, in a circle.) *En Anvers, en casa de Juan*

*Steelsio. Año D.M.LIII. sic. CON*  
*PRIUILEGIO IMPERIAL. Colofon. Fue*  
*impresso en Anuers en casa de Juan*  
*Latio. Año M.D.LIIII. 822 pp.*  
 Roman letter. 1554

It has a dedication to the Emperor Charles V. There is a copy in the Bodleian library, bearing on the title the date M.D.LV.

- IV. CATECISMO CHRISTIANO. Compuesto por el Doctor Constantino. ¶ Añadose la confession d'un pecador penitente, hecha por el mismo Autor. (Device on an engraved shield,—a man stoning a dog disturbing a hive of bees, with the motto MALIS DVLCIA MIXTA.) En Anvers en casa de Guillermo Simon, a la enseña del Papagayo, 1556. Con priuilegio, sm. 8vo. 1556

*La Confession d'un pecador penitente*, was translated into French and appeared in the *Histoire des Martyrs*, fol. 503—506. 1597

Again in Latin, in Crespin's *Acta Martyrum*. 1560

The French translation is reprinted in Gerdes' *Miscellanea Groningana*,



volume vi. part. I. pp. 459—483.

1760

M'Crie has given it partially, translated from the French of 1597, in his History of the Progress and Suppression of the Reformation in Spain. Appendix No. III. pp. 407—412, ed. 1829.

V. SUMA DE DOCTRINA CHRISTIANA.

SERMON DE NUESTRO REDENTOR EN EL MONTE.

CATEZISMO CHRISTIANO.

Confesion del Pecador. Cuatro Libros compuestos por el Doctor Constantino Ponze de la Fuente.

DE LA PERFECCION DE LA VIDA.

DEL GOBIERNO DE LA CASA. Dos Epistolas de s. Bernardo romanzadas por el maestro Martin Navarro.

Reimpreso todo fielmente,<sup>1</sup> conforme a las ediziones antiguas:—  
“Pues a todos nos va tanto en ello, cada uno debe de mirár lo que le conviene, i no pensár, que le ha de

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<sup>1</sup> Reformistas Antiguos Españoles, tom. xix. British Museum and Bodleian Libraries.

dár remedio, la culpa que los otros tienen en su perdizi6n, pues que 6l no est6 sin ella. Todos nos quejamos, que no nos hazen buenos los que tienen cargo d'ello; como si nosotros no fu6semos obligados a serlo. Cada uno mire tras quien sigue; que no le faltará remedio."— (Dr. Constantino, páj. 15.)

MADRID, AÑO DE 1863

8vo. pp. xviii. and 463.

- VI. Six Sermons on the six first verses of the First Psalm. *Beatus vir*. In Spanish. *Not discovered*; printed before 1567

It does not appear that the lectures delivered by Dr. Constantino in his theological chair at the College of Doctrine at Seville, which were in R. G. de Montes' or Montanus' possession at Heidelberg, in 1567, in manuscript, viz., on Proverbs, on Ecclesiastes, on the Song of Solomon, and on more than half the book of Job,—taken down after the manner of Tauler's sermons by one of his admirers, whose real name lies hidden under the pseudo name of BAB,—were ever printed by him according to his declared intention.

Borrowing here the quaint old English

translation from de Montes' Latin, by Vincent Skinner, Clerk of the Council, 1568, the reader will have an estimate of Dr. Constantino's books, by a man who best knew him personally, and who could best appreciate them at the time.

“ There be diuers of this man's works that have passed the print. First, a brief summe of Christian religion. Also one other discourse [the *Doctrina Christiana*] in the same argument more at large, but somewhat imperfect, or rather, scarcely half finished: for he purposed to have comprehended the whole bodie of Christian religion, in two tomes. In the former he treated of Faith. In the other he thought to have handled the Sacraments, and to have spoken of Works, and generally of the dutie of a Christian man. As for the former part, it was already published some yeares agoe [in 1549], whereby he procured some displeasure and suspicion of heresie among the common sort of learned men, forasmuch as treating of Faith he did not plainly inneigh against the Lutherans, nor attributed any pre-eminence to the Bishop of Rome, but had written rather in derogation of pardons, of purgatory, of men's merits, and such other like trifles, than in aduancement thereof: vpon the

which suspicions being examined he would answer them, that such matters as they wanted in his workes were more pertinent to his second tome, wherein he purposed to discourse of them somewhat largely. Howbeit this other volume neuer came to light, except, perhaps, it were, that which was hidden in the widow's house, and came to the Inquisitors' hands, the special points whereof they published [in his accusation]. Moreover he set forth a *Catechisme*, which perhaps in other places, elsewhere of more freedome and libertie, was not greatly accounted of, but yet in these places of darkness and ignorance and vnder such tyranny, it gave much light to many. There be also extant *six sermons* which he made vpon six of the first verses of the first Psalme. Wherein the learned may see, as well, the profound learning that was in him, as also his singular art for conueiance. But of all his workes, which surely were as learnedly written and as godly as anie that ever were read in Spaine, the *CONFESSION OF A SINNER* not passing two or three sheets long, exceeded all the rest, both for zeale, learning, and eloquence vttered therein, most liuely expressing the affections of a Christian man, incident to such an argument.

First he bringeth in a man before the judgment seat of God, making him to see, and lively to lament his owne filthiness and abomination, to cast off all whatsoever these pharisees, flattering themselves with their own righteousness, were wont to couer our nakednesse withall, being eyther deuised or established by man, and therein he peruseth the *Ten Commandments* orderly, confessing him guiltie of the breach thereof and therewithall maketh so plaine and absolute an exposition of the whole Law in that short summarie, that in such a breuiat (be it spoken without offence to any) I have not hitherto seene any so lightsome. In the end hee clotheth them with the wedding garment of Christ's righteousness by faith, wherewith alonely he encourageth and emboldeneth man before the face of God, as much as he discomforted him before, when as he brought him to the perfect knowledge of himselfe, and the consideration of his own case and estate. Finally there is no one iot that concerneth the Christian religion, but he hath touched it, referring it to some purpose in that briefe table: nor any affection that can be in a man, from the very first letter of the Law till the last end of the Gospel, and the fruition of the heavenly ha-

bitation, but he hath most lively expressed it. Neither had he been euer able to deuise such a peece of worke, notwithstanding his passing gifts of nature and helps of art, except he had first learned them by often experience in himself. All the which books of his writing, worthie (no doubt) to be reserued for euer, albeit the Inquisitours had a little before vn-awares allowed, yet at this time they condemned them: not for any thing found in them worthy of condemnation (as they themselves testified in their sentence vpon him), but because there should be nothing extant that might remaine as a monument or a memorial sounding any wayes to the commendation of him whom they had holden accursed." —Folio 98-9, ed. 1568.

Such was the estimate of the character of these works, and, more especially, of the "Confession of a Sinner," drawn by a contemporary, a personal friend and hearer of the author, Cyprian de Valera, known afterwards by his translation of the Spanish Bible, who also knew him at Seville, and who enthusiastically calls him the "*unica perla de nuestra España*,"<sup>1</sup> the

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<sup>1</sup> Dos Tratados, ed. 1588, p. 269.

unique pearl of our Spain ! Not less admirably portrayed is the eulogium of a learned Christian Spanish writer of the present day, whose language, for its beauty, elevated sentiments, and convincing arguments, may well bear a comparison with the best writers of this or any other country.<sup>1</sup>

“To my mind,” says he, “Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente is to be classed amongst the best Spanish writers ; for if style be most elevated when it presents, with the greatest vividness to the reader, the most lucid idea of that which lies hidden in the mind, the Doctor’s mode of expression, which has so well succeeded in setting forth the profoundest thoughts, without borrowing obscure terms, may truthfully be called a pattern and a model in our (the Spanish) tongue. And this appears to be a distinctive characteristic of four writers, Spanish reformers, it is so of Valdés, of Perez, of Valera, and of our author. Compare them with the most celebrated writers in the Spanish language, at least with those who are most generally recognised as such, in Luis

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<sup>1</sup> See “Reformistas Antiguos Españoles,” tomo xix Madrid, Año de MDCCCLXIII. p. 456—460.

de Granada, in Luis de Leon, in Malon de Chaide, and in many others more ancient and more modern than they. Truly they excel in Castilian purity, and their eloquence is of a higher range than that of those four; but in conformity of eloquence and expression to nature the four bear the palm. There is not the least indication to be discovered in them of a desire to mould Spanish wholly upon Latin; nor of their having laboriously sought out in contemporary poetical works, in foreign lexicons, or in the exercise of caprice, words, that might captivate by their harmony, or dazzle by their beauty. They only seek to make themselves understood even by the most uncultivated; and to persuade by great moderation. They neither aim at carrying away their readers, nor at captivating them by artifice."

"We seem to have a clear proof of this, restricting ourselves to Dr. Constantino only as illustrated in his four works, 'The Summary of Christian Doctrine,' 'Our Lord's Sermon on the Mount,' 'The Christian Catechism,' and 'The Confession of a Sinner.' Our author, at the beginning of his commentary upon our Lord's sermon on the mount, expresses his anxiety as paramount that he should not be-



wilder his readers ; that they should not have that to read which they could not understand ; that he but varied his expressions and expositions, in order that that which was obscure to them in the one, might be clear in the other. And he carried out his purpose, to the honour of his ability, and in a style that very few could compete with. On the very page from which the above is quoted, he notifies the publication of his work ‘Christian Doctrine.’ Then comparing it with the Summary of Doctrine, and this again with the Catechism, it is observable that the Doctor, with consummate prudence, knew how to abridge the first work into the second, and this again into the third, without omitting anything absolutely essential.”

“Comparing the Summary with the Catechism, the inferences drawn from the Commandments and from the Lord’s Prayer, inculcating Christian holiness, are more concise in the latter ; but the inferences lose nothing of their force by their succinctness, but rather they acquire energy by being condensed.”

Again I find, in all three works, a beauty, negative if you please, since it consists in their not giving pain, by a deviation from Christian doctrine, or want of harmony with it, which

unfortunately appears in all the Catechisms and books in the Spanish language which treat of Christian doctrine."

"In neither of Dr. Constantino's smaller works abovementioned, nor in the greater one from which they are abridged, do we find fallible humanity,—wretched mortal man, liable to err at every step,—constituted as 'infallible head' of our Lord Jesus Christ's Church; nor is there any such misery named, no, not even to condemn it. And herein the Doctor distinguishes himself from Calvin and from Luther, notwithstanding that he was a theologian and Canonist attached to the Church of Spain, and that he had to get the 'imprimatur' for his works through the consent of the Inquisitors of the Castle of Triana. And this negative beauty is, to my mind, not only important but holy. Dr. Constantino was well skilled in the Ritual, and consequently admitted those doctrines of baptism, sacraments, sacrifices,—all derived from the ancient Law; but the Doctor has not soiled those pages with the slightest mention of deviation (from the gospel) of such kind. Thus to despise all controversy in books of Christian instruction upon such a subject is charming."

“I shall, in the last place, permit myself to extol the gift which the author had received, or, if you please, the faculty of inferring and discerning, from the examination which he makes of the Commandments, of the Lord’s Prayer, and of the Sermon on the Mount, the necessity of inward self-examination, as he does in the ‘Confession of a Sinner.’ And in confessing himself, after that examination, he presents himself to us as a preacher, who teaches as he preaches, and discharges the duty of *self-examination*.”

“A profound thinker has well said, that the excellence of human nature and that which distinguishes man from the inferior creatures, even more than reason itself, is that he is able to reflect upon all that passes within him, that he can discern his soul’s inclinations, and ascertain his own purposes.”

“Well then, this characteristic faculty of self-examination would never have been given to man if it had not been designed that he should keep this faculty in perpetual exercise. Prudence prescribes the common law, that we should look well to our property, both spiritual and temporal. We have appetites to conquer, imaginations to subdue, temperaments to regu-

late, passions to subjugate ; and this inward operation cannot be accomplished, nor can we keep our thoughts within bounds, nor can we give our affections their due inclination, nor preserve this little republic, this microcosm of our body, from incessant insurrection, nor can we exercise over it the moderating faculty, unless we keep this capacity of discernment and this faculty of introspection in continual exercise. Without constant vigilance, imagination will raise its standard against us, conscience will become an open rebel."

"This inward insight, this power of *introspection*, or ability of inspecting ourselves, was conceded us in order that we should keep a perpetual watch upon the soul. Upon incessant vigilance over the inward movements of those fertile seeds of action, of those prolific sources of vice and virtue, will depend the formation and development of the moral and religious character. A superficial glance is inadequate to fathom a depth so profound ; a hurried view will not attain to penetrate an object so deceitful ; nor will occasional observation regulate an object so fluctuating as the human heart."

"We ought to examine not only our conduct, but our opinions ; our faults and our prejudices

likewise; our proclivities, as well as our judgments. Our actions manifest themselves, and do not require to be so nearly scanned by us as our motives."

"Let us then, like the author in the 'Confession,' continually revert to consider our inward selves, we shall thus combat the blindness of our self-love, which leads us to receive the flatteries of others. He that does not flatter himself will certainly not be damaged by another's flattery. If we but well examine our motives we shall have frequent cause to be ashamed of actions for which we are commended. Let us examine what we do, but still more the motive and the end, why we do it."

"Let us however agree that there is a fictitious or spurious self-examination, which rather tends to blind than to enlighten. He that considers himself with self-complacency because he has abandoned some notorious vice, or some habitual sin, which he cherished; or that he has substituted certain formulas for open impiety; or who feels self-gratification by comparing what he is with what he was; such an one deceives himself, in that he, instead of adopting the standard of the Holy Spirit and of the Scrip-

tures in his self-examination, tests himself solely by his past conduct. The recollection of having given up some vice, or having acquired some virtue, will feed our vanity; but the sustained habit of continuously examining into our wickedness, of ruminating, if we may so express it, upon our sins, this, though bitter and penible, will be useful and safe. We can only know the heart thoroughly by probing its depths, and it is only by knowledge of the heart that the life can be reformed. The examination which Dr. Constantino made of himself in the 'Confession of a Sinner' may serve us as a model for self-examination. Let us despise neither his example nor his advice."

"With regard to the sacraments and other ritual doctrines which are taught or adopted in these writings of Dr. Constantino, they, to me at least, appear quite alien to the teaching of the Christian religion. If to be a true Christian, be to worship God '*in spirit and in truth*,' this appears to be the only thing necessary, and that alone which ought to be taught Christ's disciples or followers. And as to the infallibility of those Churches composed of others than those who are worshippers '*in spirit and in truth*,' these very works of Dr. Constan-

tino in their varied fortunes will clearly indicate what we ought to think of them. When the Spanish Inquisitors did not hold their author to be heterodox, they approved and extolled his works exceedingly; and then when they burned the doctor's bones and vilified his memory, then they condemned as pestilent *these very writings* which they previously had commended as beneficent. What infallibility is this? Had the Saviour subjected Christians all over the earth to the dominion and inspection of the head of a Church of similar infallibility, He would have imposed a duty on *one* man that a hundred cannot discharge, and He would have selected one of the most imperfect forms of government that could have been devised."









THE CONFESSION OF A SINNER,  
BY DR. CONSTANTINO PONCE DE LA FUENTE,

A SPANISH REFORMER OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY

JOHN T. BETTS.







## TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

**I**T was through association with my lamented friend, Benjamin Barron Wiffen, that I was led to interest myself in the lives and works of the ancient Spanish Reformers, and I had translated Juan de Valdés' "CX Divine Considerations" before I visited Spain in 1864. It was in conjunction with Benjamin Wiffen that I published that work, for he wrote the notice of Valdés' life and writings, prefixed to it, before I left England, and he corrected the press of the whole whilst I was in Spain.

Much as I needed a greater knowledge of the language, literature, people, and associations

of Spain, I had a still greater inducement to visit that country in the prospect of personal intimacy with Don Luis Usez i Rio, the pious, learned, and patriotic Editor of the ancient Spanish Reformers, "Los Reformistas Antiguos Españoles," a privilege realised during six weeks of the last year of his life. He it was who gave me definite work in the field of literary labour which I had selected.

Of the ancient Spanish Reformers twenty volumes were reprinted by him at a private press, but they have never been published, the intolerance of the late Government having prevented their publication in Spain; they are however on the shelves of our University libraries of Oxford and Cambridge, and in all the national libraries of Europe and America, where they will be found by scholars throughout prospective generations.

This collection comprises the works of Juan and Alfonso de Valdés, Juan Perez, Cipriano de Valera, R. G. de Montes, Juan Diaz, Francisco de

Euzinas, Juan de Nichôlas i Sacharles, Fernando de Tejada, and Dr. Constantino Ponce de la Fuente. They were published by their Editor, to the glory of God and for the welfare of Spain, “para bien de España,” as he himself declares upon the title page of Carrascon. The original copies of these works are exceedingly rare, and now that they recently are prized and are sought after, they have become very expensive. It cost their Editor and Benjamin B. Wiffen, years of diligent and widely extended search in all the libraries of Europe, and elsewhere, to find them; as the Editor got them, he reprinted them; and when he had reprinted one, he immediately distributed it in all countries, so that it should be impossible to destroy them.

The *Confession of a Sinner* was specially prized by Don Luis, and he commended it to me for translation into English, as good work to be done for Christ's cause; he offered to pay all the expenses incident to its ultimate publi-

cation. I translated it *con amore* at Seville, the city where it was written, and where Dr. Constantino exposed himself to the dungeon and to the stake by the manifestation of his religious convictions. Seville teems with memorials of him. There is the convent of San Isidro, where he lived; there is the Cathedral which he filled with crowded audiences, who assembled before dawn to get within hearing distance; by the bridge is the site of the Castle of Triana, on the low banks of the Guadalquivir, where in a damp and dark dungeon he lingered and died, after having endured every indignity and every privation that malice could suggest; and there is the *quemadero*, the site of the Autos de Fé, where the Protestant Christians were burnt, and where Dr. Constantino was burnt in effigy, to taint his memory in the consideration of his countrymen; it is situate at the extremity of the beautiful tropical garden attached to the Duke of Montpensier's palace.

I anticipate that the reader will realize my experience, and that Dr. Constantino's searching self examination will come home to him to probe his conscience like the presence of a living spirit, or voice, within his own bosom.









THE CONFESSION OF A SINNER  
UNTO JESUS CHRIST,

THE REDEEMER AND JUDGE OF MANKIND,

*Which will serve to exhort any other sinner unto true repentance, and to instruct him, by varied considerations, in self-knowledge, in his duty to God, and of the mode in which he has to invoke divine mercy, ever following the illumination and precepts given us in the Holy Scriptures with reference to every one of these things.*



APPEAR before the tribunal of Thy mercy, Thou only begotten Son of God, delivered by the Eternal Father, to be the ransom and redemption,—to be the sacrifice and Judge of mankind.

I come, O Lord, that Thou shouldest hear me tell, not of my righteousness, but of my sins; not of my good deeds, but of my faults, and of the heinous offences which I have committed, not only against mankind, but against the majesty, the goodness, and the mercy of Thy Father.

On the one hand, dragged and constrained by the pains and torments of hell, inwardly suggested by my misdeeds, whilst, on the other hand, called by Thy mercy, to know, although too late, what Thou hast been to me, and what I have been to Thee.

I come accused by my own conscience, condemned by it, constrained by the torments of self-knowledge, to tell and to confess before men, before angels, in the presence of earth and in the presence of heaven, before the tribunal of Thy Majesty and of divine justice, that I justly deserve to be condemned to perpetual banishment from the joys of heaven, and to perpetual misery in slavish association with Satan.

My Redeemer and my Lord, my suit were ended, were Thy judgment one but to sentence

and to condemn sinners. Woe were me! if angels had to judge me, if I had to judge myself my lot were wretched and disastrous; if in confessing my transgressions and shortcomings my creditor had at once proceeded to execution; if, upon the knowledge of my guilt, no respite had been granted me; if, when unable to reply, my adversary's accusation had then been pronounced as just; if, when unable to pay, I had then been cast into prison, at my enemy's discretion. It has pleased Thee, that this should be earthly justice, in order that we should by it be exposed to lose only earthly things.

But, as by the other, O Lord, we risked to lose heaven, and we risked to lose Thee; to meet this state of things Thy goodness ordained new laws of justice, drawn from the greatness of Thy mercy, in which Thy ways should be as distinct from those of the world, as is heaven from earth.

Blessed art Thou, O Lord, and may they ever praise Thee, who learn to know Thee, that such is Thy judgment seat; that Thou camest into this world not to condemn sinners, but to

save them; that being just, Thou art the Judge and Advocate of the guilty, and the adversary of his accuser; that Thou didst undergo such trials, and wert tempted in such various ways, that we might have greater pledges of Thy mercy; that Thou art holiness for the sinner, righteousness for the guilty, payment and satisfaction for the poverty-stricken one, wisdom for the deceived one, and the respondent for him that knew not how to reply.

That I know this of Thee, my Redeemer, draws me to Thee. This, my knowing Thee to be such, has prevailed more with me than that knowledge of myself which would have led me not to dare to present myself before Thee.

Where, Lord, shall I begin to enumerate my sins; what course shall I follow, that the miseries of my life may be the better set forth? Well do I see, O my Redeemer, that Thou knowest my career thoroughly, but I had to know myself in order the better to know Thee. Well I know that the sum of my sins is innumerable, for they exceed in number the hairs

of my head, or that of the sand on the sea-shore. But at least I would dwell awhile upon some of my wretched doings, in order that just as I at one time made a sport of my sins, so now my eyes and heart may weep when contemplating the mode in which I squandered away in dissipation the blessings of Thy providence.

Give me, O Lord, eyes that I may see myself, and strength that I may hold up under self-scrutiny. For my sins are so numerous and so aggravated that I myself am ashamed to recognise them as mine, and am tempted to relieve myself by another sin, that of disowning and denying myself, as though I could discover another self less guilty. But with all this, Lord, I see Thy mercy is such, that whilst I close my eyes when confronted by my sins, Thou keepest Thine open and fixed upon them all; for it is clear, O Redeemer of the World, that Thou lookest upon wounds in order to heal them, since however hideous they may be, they do not disgust Thee, and Thou condescendest to infuse from Thy hands cleansing into them. Guide me, O my Lord, and draw me to Thy-

self, for alone I shall not attain to know myself, Thy presence shall give me strength to bear up under self-scrutiny. Hold me, that I flee not from myself. Sustain me, that I yield not to despair. Impose silence upon Satan, until Thou answer for me.

Time was, when I, Lord, had no existence ; by Thy fiat spoken into being, what time Thou mouldedst me in my mother's womb, there Thou didst invest me with Thine image and likeness, and didst endue me with capacity to enjoy Thy blessings. There was nothing so minute, or so imperfect in my frame, but that it was directed by Thy wisdom and by Thy handiwork, until brought to perfection. It was no small marvel, when, aided by Thy hand, I entered upon life's scene, where I was entertained by and delighted with the bounties of Thy providence.

I found myself naked, and Thou clothedst me ; powerless, and Thou sustainedst me ; and in every way Thou hast given me to understand (know) that Thy mercy was the only thing upon which from my birth I might rely, and that this never would fail me.

Before that I was conscious of my ruin, I was lost; I contracted guilt in my mother's womb, and this was incident to my being born of Adam's race. My ancestral inheritance is nakedness and sin. In every way the arms of Thy mercy embraced me; Thou hast succoured me, Lord, in my poverty, and hast delivered me from my peculiar ills. Thou hast given me riches and beauty, and hast removed my deformity of soul; Thou hast cleansed me with water filtered to brightness by the purification of Thy blood.

Thou hast conferred upon me the graces I most needed, which most made me Thine, which most delivered me from my adversary, which most intimidated him, and which were the surest pledges of my bliss. Looking upon myself in the light in which I now do, I should, were it not for my knowledge of Thy wisdom and for the trust and confidence I have in Thee, say: O, that they had but borne me thence to the grave. For if on the one hand it might be said that existence was to me a blessing, yet, on the other, I should, both as to my faults and sins, be as one who had never existed!

But I would not sit in judgment upon Thy glory, since I have so little striven to promote it, nor upon Thy will, since it is righteousness itself. Thou, Lord, hast deigned to take me into Thy service; but I remained in it only so long as I was unable to desist therefrom. Thy gifts were, when imparted to me, perfect; but they were distorted and perverted as soon as I had the ability to do so. My innocence ceased when my eyes opened to malice.

I may say, that whilst I slept I was Thine; but that when I awoke, to recognise Thee, O Lord, I would not see Thee. When most called upon to follow Thee, then it was that I fled most hurriedly from Thee. Ruin charmed me, I rushed to perdition, surrendering Thy blessings to be squandered and dissipated as though I impersonated ruin, and ruin impersonated me. I leagued with all Thy enemies, as though Thy blessings were conferred upon me on the condition of reiterated apostacy from Thee. I shut my eyes, I closed my ears, and I obstructed my senses, to the perception that I was in Thy temple; that the heaven that lighted me was Thine, and Thine the earth by



which I lived ; that, disavowing and acting treacherously to Thy goodness, I stole all that I enjoyed, shamelessly repudiating Thy mercy and insolently defying Thy justice. And thus I slept as securely as though I had been intent upon Thy service, and had applied everything to the end for which Thou hadst given them me.

*First Commandment.*

[“ THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BUT ME.”]

Being drawn by such Thy benefits, to love Thee with all my heart, to have my will absorbed in Thy service, and to have all my faculties quickened in the practice of those works whercin Thou willest that they be characterised who are made in Thy likeness, I turned a deaf ear to them all. I opened the door of my heart to Thine enemies and mine ; the temple consecrated to Thy abode was, with my consent, made to harbour those who insulted and outraged Thy Majesty. Where I ought to have received blessing from Thy hand, I received a curse and the darkness of Satan.

Such, Lord, were the quarters and such the reception given to Thy grace by my sins. Thus was the image, which Thou didst stamp upon me, guarded by me. It was as though I were prepared to spend my life, or indeed a thousand lives, in so disguising myself, that when Thou, Lord, soughtest me, Thou shouldst not know me. Thou alone having created me, Thou alone having redeemed me, Thou alone having sought me in my miseries, in order to deliver me from them ; solely dependent upon Thy goodness, eternity, and infinity, of such importance to me, I nevertheless have made my heart as many idols as were the interests of my iniquities.

*Spiritual Idolatry.*

Wert Thou, O my God, to ask me who I am, I could not reply that I am an Israelite, of the stock of Abraham, chosen to be Thine. O Lord, my ancestors were Canaanites, my father was an Amorite, my mother a Hittite. I am of those who have defaced Thy works ; of those who have greatly provoked Thy wrath ; of those who forgetful of Thy blessings, have

sought by them to exalt themselves ; without loving Thy grace, or fearing Thy wrath ; of those who have adored their own pleasures, pride, and shame ; of those who have followed devils, and have sold their souls to them, and have prayed to them to attain their desires. I know no other men to whom I may be compared, save such as these whom Thou hast denounced, and whose works I know I have followed ; for the obedience and reverence which are due to Thee alone, I have paid to my appetites, to my sinful lusts, and to their favoured objects. To other idols, the creations of my sins and of my lusts, and the objects of their reverence, my heart truly paid devotion ; to Thee, who alone art the true God, and who alone art my God, my devotion was a falsehood and a lie. I did indeed invoke them, whilst my invocation of Thee was but mockery. On them my hope was fixed, but I distrusted Thee. I called on Thee, but I fled from Thee. I said, Thou wert my God, and I lied. I asked pardon for my treasons perpetrated against Thee. I asked Thee to show grace, disbelieving Thou wert gracious. So that I invoked Thee to such ends and aims, as

were suggested by the shamelessness and blasphemy of my heart, which would fain have Thee to be like myself.

[It is needful for the reader to consider that Dr. Constantino used the Decalogue authorised by his Church, and not as it stands in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, in which the commandment known as the *second*, "Thou shalt not make unto thyself any graven image," &c., is omitted, and our *third*, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," is substituted as the second, and thus successively. The mode in which the number of the commandments is still made up is by dividing the *tenth* commandment into two, thus:—

"9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

"10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods."]

*Second Commandment.*

[“THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN; FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTY THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN.”]

My inmost soul being such, my mode of

speech could not be better. As in my heart I called Thee Lord, so did I likewise with my mouth. In the one I was false to Thee; in the other both to Thee and to man. I took advantage of [I bore] Thy Name to appear to be Thine, and to promote my own interests. Habit led me to take Thy Name upon my lips, whilst my heart was so far from Thee. Destitute of true faith I have invoked Thee; without true hope I asked Thy aid; as a light thing and on light occasions I have taken Thy sacred Name in vain; my prayers have been fruitless; Thee have I invoked and the winds have borne away my sacrifice, for I kept neither faith nor word with Thee, though expecting Thee to keep word with me. Thy Holy Name being the memorial which I had to bear, owning whom Thou wert, whom it was my duty to recollect, wherever I might hear it; since it was my duty to recollect and teach others the fear and reverence which all owe Thee, I took Thy Name in vain, insulting Thy Majesty and Greatness by irreverence, thereby giving occasion to many others to do the same as I did, as though my sins fell short of my heart's desire.

*Third Commandment.*

[“REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOUR, AND DO ALL THY WORK ; BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD ; IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK, THOU, NOR THY SON, NOR THY DAUGHTER, THY MANSERVANT, NOR THY MAIDSERVANT, NOR THY CATTLE, NOR THY STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN THY GATES : FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY ; WHEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SABBATH DAY, AND HALLOWED IT.”]

Thou hast appointed me days, in which I should show myself to be Thine ; that at such seasons I should bear my testimony to the service which I was wont to pay Thee ; in which I might learn Thy Commandments, and Thy righteous precepts ; in which I should ponder in my heart the greatness of Thy power, of Thy goodness, and of Thy mercy ; the way in which I was lost, and that which Thou hast revealed for my recovery, in descending from heaven to die that I might live ; to suffer per-

secution and worldly dishonour, in order that I might be honoured of Thy Father.

In a thousand ways hast Thou declared to me that Thou hast neither made nor enriched me for my own sake only, but that I shall distribute Thy superabundant gifts to all around me. That taught by Thee, I should teach others ; that called, I should call them ; should warn them by my words ; should stimulate them by my example ; that I should run after and highly prize the society of Thy people, and pride myself upon being one of them. Thy mercy has not left me without remedy in any respect, but it has left me without excuse in all. Thou hast provided me with all that is needed in this short and miserable life, in order so to pass it that the exercise which the body needs should not disturb the enjoyments of the soul ; that I might find seasons in which, forgetting everything else, I should only recollect Thee ; in order that I might have ample leisure to know Thee, and ample time, O Lord, to invoke Thee ; that I might inwardly feel the day to be holy, and experience the repose of Thy works ; to lay up stores of faith, love, hope,

and charity, wherewith to sustain and defend myself in my perils and labours; that in the crosses of this most weary life I might solace and rejoice myself in Thee. What shall I say, Lord, here? What account shall I give of this my duty? Thou knowest my grave faults and shortcomings, the which I cannot know in their aggravation and number.

The holy days which ought to have been dedicated only to Thy Name and service, have been dedicated to my vanity. The sacred days have been devoted to the gratification of my folly, which ought to have been consecrated to Thy worship and to the knowledge of Thee. Instead of acquiring light, I increased in darkness; instead of calling upon Thee, I stood aloof from Thee; instead of inviting others, I obstructed their path both by my words and by my works. I avoided Thy people, and the holy day was spent by me with Thine enemies. And the instruction I derived from Thy schooling in providence was as though it had been calculated to teach me to abhor Thee. I, as Thy enemy, laid a cross, wrought by my sins, upon Thy shoulders, on



the very day upon which Thou hadst invited me to feast with Thee.

*Fourth Commandment.*

[“HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER ; THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.”]

Of him, who disowned and disparaged Thee, O Lord, who art infinitely more worthy of esteem and art greater than every other, it will readily be judged, that he would do the same to his parents, whom Thou hast put in Thy place.

Thou, who jointly with Thy Father, hast for my sake formed both earth and heaven ; who hast spoken me into existence by a word, and hast brought me forth into the light ; who hast been my Father by creation ; my sacrifice, by redemption ; who hast begotten me again at the cost of Thy blood ; who art a light to guide me, an advocate to answer for me ; whose benefits and mercies, in order to free me from perdition, can neither be reckoned up nor exaggerated. Thou hast been so disowned and disavowed by my heart, so disrespectfully

spoken of by my lips, and so irreverently treated by me in my actions, how should it have been otherwise with my parents, who were but ministers to furnish me a body and to bring me forth in this short life? From what parents would not he run away, who fled so far from Thee? From whose jurisdiction would he not escape, who sought to escape from Thine? Whom would he not contemn who contemned Thee? What would he fear, who did not fear Thy judgment? What benefits would excite his gratitude, who did not feel thankful for Thine? By what should he be moved to reverence others, who, with such benefits, was never moved to reverence Thee?

I have lived as though I had been my own Creator; as though I had never received any favours from others, without law and without superior; proud and ungrateful to all; self-constituted judge of those by whom I had to be judged. Needing some one to show me favour, who should rule and govern me, who should bridle and chastise my great licentiousness; I sought to emancipate myself from all law.

It has been my desire that no one should obstruct the indulgence of my appetites; I have abhorred all righteous rule, and I have sought to render my will absolute in everything.

*Fifth Commandment.*

[“THOU SHALT NOT KILL.”]

As I sought that my perverse and naturally treacherous heart should stand in fear of no one, out of respect to whom it should feel shame, I acquiesced in its transgression of all just and reasonable bounds, in contempt and abhorrence of my neighbours, disregarding that they were the work of Thy hands as was I myself; created for the same end, redeemed by Thy blood, preserved by Thy mercy, endowed and privileged by Thy great favours; who rendered Thee service and were useful to society; I vilified them and I disparaged them; I avenged myself upon them for trifles that did not concur with my silly conceits. Not bearing in mind how much Thou didst pardon and forbear in them, nor how much Thou didst forgive and forbear in myself. The wrongs

I wrought against others were weighed as light by me, whilst a straw that to my mind moved awry was intolerable. So great is the tyranny that has entered into this most wretched and most miserable heart.

*Sixth Commandment.*

[“THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.”]

Embodying in Thyself the perfections upon which my soul and thoughts should revolve, whilst there is that order in the world, that harmony amongst Thy creatures, which reveal Thee to so great an extent, and with such certainty, I abandoned my eyes to revel in vain sensual pleasures ; I walked with the greatest heedlessness, leaving my heart's avenues open. Unconscious, I never reflected that my passion made that hideous which Thou createdst beautiful, that my thoughts defiled that which Thou hadst created to be pure. I burnt myself, without feeling it, I longed for that, which it was my duty to flee ; I drank mortal poisons wrapped up and disguised in false honey, and knew that they were so when I drank them. I lost myself in licentiousness, and when I

sought recovery, I disregarded the nature of my medicines ; the cure having to be effected by blisters, I tried emollients. I continued to walk in the way wherein I had lost myself, the prospect of ruin gave me no concern ; I threatened my enemies, and their persecution never roused me to effort. That I should have fallen into such varied follies was but reasonable, seeing that I had departed from Thee so widely and so variously. Thou didst will that I should be wholly clean, I sought to be wholly filthy ; I thought to be clean, without avoiding filth, my madness did not stop here, for it sought to free itself from all prohibitory restraint and it fain would act the tyrant in everything.

*Seventh Commandment.*

[“THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.”]

Thou, O Lord, so just and so bountiful, hast distributed the world and all its good things amongst men, as having no need of such riches Thyself, for that Thy Power and Wisdom are boundless to multiply them at Thy will. I felt dissatisfied with the share of them assigned me.

I who was such a person, that had I been dealt with according to my works, I should have retained in my hands nothing of all that Thou hast created. Had it been looked to how I had employed that which Thou hast given me, I was in everything a thief and a spendthrift. Relation being had to the limits and to the brevity of this miserable life, the least portion was sufficient for me, whilst all beyond was but a deposit committed to my charge for the relief of the necessities of others. Labour and exile were entailed upon me by my sins, but the labour of my hands sufficiently supplied my needs, and was in itself an exceedingly great boon. From Thy kindness, Thy munificence and Thy wisdom, I ought to have understood that Thou didst give me what was suitable for me, and that whatever was derived from other sources could never prosper. But inflated in my imagination, I desired all that the world possessed, and in my cravings clutched at it. I kept my hands from stealing other men's property and dignities, but it never occurred to me that I left the door open to my pride which would have held a thousand worlds but

as insignificant. I consented to walk blindfold, and did walk so, heedlessly, in order that my eyes should not see who I was, and that the most retired corner of the earth was more than was required for my habitation; as likewise, with what equity Thou hadst supplied others, and how well they were entitled to what they possessed. I knew not how to distinguish between that which is obtained through Thy will, and that which is so, through worldly craft; I heartily assented to the indulgence of all my vanities and blindness. I was satisfied to do that which was just, as between man and man, without reflecting and without seeing that Thou knewest me to be a thief.

*Eighth Commandment.*

[“THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST  
THY NEIGHBOUR.”]

I not only exalted and aggrandised self in one class of interests, but my folly found opportunity to employ all that the world offers of both good and bad. Like a cheat and a liar, I dealt with false measures. For self, I grasped after much; to others, I gave

but little. It was my practice to lie, both with reference to my own feelings, and to the virtues of others. It being my duty to endeavour to conceal my neighbour's disgrace and to prevent its being discovered, I did nothing whereby to remedy the discovery when made. I was unjustly and excessively lenient to my own failings, and unjustly and excessively severe to the failings of others. I tried to heap up fortune for myself, thinking, like a vain man, that loss incurred by others was profit to me. My own illusions gained with me greater credit than did truth from the lips of others.

*Ninth and Tenth Commandments (sic.)*

[“THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MANSERVANT, NOR HIS MAIDSERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANYTHING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOUR'S.”]

The objects, which Thy Righteousness placed in the hands of others, and bestowed upon those who held them to be *their* own, how frequently did the evil principle of my heart contemplate these objects as *its* own! How often did it,



with malignant heedlessness, allow itself to dream that Thy Providence had erred, since it had placed in other hands that which seemed desirable for myself, and had not constituted me the sole proprietor of every thing. I found myself alert to all that was wrong, and torpid as to all that was right. I never found in myself more than a feeble germ of principle in reference to that which is good, and consequently I flagged in its performance. Besides, right suggestions, because they emanated from Thee, were ever but ill entertained by me. I have been stubborn in the wrong, and when I did not carry it out, I yielded to and trifled with it, in order that my raving fancies might dally with it. Whilst my happiness depended upon nothing else but upon the observance of Laws and Commandments, dictated by Thy Goodness and Wisdom, which should serve as a lamp to my feet and a light to my path, and wherein I might feel assured that I did render Thee service; I, moved by pride, sought to be exempted from them all; not choosing to consider, that what I took for liberty was the slavery and captivity of ignorance and a wretchedness imposed on me by Satan.

## ARTICLES OF FAITH. (CREED.)

I made my boast of the Faith and of the doctrine preached by Thee when upon earth : and I never inwardly examined myself to ascertain what difference there was between that which I outwardly heard and confessed with my lips, and that which I ought to inwardly feel in my heart.

I affirmed that Thy Eternal Father, in conjunction with Thee and the Holy Spirit, created heaven and earth : manifesting by this so stupendous work, that Thy power is infinite, and calling upon men to recognize it to be so ; that Thy mercy is boundless ; Thy goodness and Thy Beauty transcending wish and thought ; Thy Wisdom equal to Thy Power ; Thy Providence ever watchful and never failing ; Thy protecting Power as sure and as certain, as enduring and as firm, as the very earth, the very heaven itself, which Thou framedst for this purpose.

All this was evident to me, and so it needed to be, in order to convince me, and to bring me to obedience to Thy Word, and to reliance upon

Thy Promises. But lost fool that I was, I harboured treason in my soul without being aware of it!

I doubted whether Thou wouldst keep faith with me; and I set about to discover by my wits, remedy and security with reference to that concerning which I distrusted Thee. I thought by hunting far and near to find that which I felt disinclined to seek in Thee alone. I did not look upon myself as rich and privileged in the treasures which I held deposited with Thee; my satisfaction was awakened by the driblet of which I thought to rob Thee, my heart being puffed up therewith, not knowing that it was Thine and that my reserves in Thee, to be had for the asking, were much greater. Thy greatness persuaded me to ask and Thy mighty power terrified me, if I refused to do so: but I could never be brought to understand how powerful was Thy goodness to bless me and Thy wrath to chastise me.

Who, Lord, could adequately bewail the repose, the tranquillity, and the security which I lost, because I did not commit myself to Thy hands; because I did not follow in the steps

traced by Thy wisdom ; because I did not bear myself as the son of a Father so rich and so powerful ; and above all, in having exchanged peace of mind for such great disquietude of heart ! for the heart was left to vagabondise in the misery of this wretched life ; seeking security when there was none ; favour of enemies ; assurance, where all is false ; truth, where there is nothing but deceit ; liberty, where all is in subjection and captivity.

Being Creator and Upholder of the world, with Thy Father, in the unity of one essence, and of one God ; knowing how abused by me Thy first gift, committed to my hands, had been, Thou, Lord, hast assumed a new office, in relation to myself, that of being my Saviour and my King ; to deliver me from all the dangers and disasters to which I had exposed myself, and to be ever henceforth my Captain and my Defender, in order that I might not relapse into them. I, like a simpleton, ignoring my own sins and ignoring Thy mercy, have neither looked upon myself as lost in the fall, nor have I acknowledged Thy gracious favours, I have neither gained experience from my first fall,

nor have I taken precautions against future falls.

I invoked Thee by name as my Saviour, and yet in ruin itself I kept my hands folded. I called Thee my King and my Defender, whilst at that very time scorning Thy laws, transgressing Thy ordinances, and disowning Thy banner. So befooled was I by the deceitfulness of sin, that whilst I confessed that Thou wert my King, Thou alone my Saviour, why, my very conscience might admonish me that my confession was false; but I tranquillised my fears with a thousand vain reliances very distinct from, and very alien to, the character which Thou hadst given me of Thyself, and from what Thou art.

The pride of man having been such that he sought to be like to God, Thou didst so commiserate his fall, that Thou didst not only humble Thyself to be like man, but truly to become man; not merely man, but the most abject of men; taking upon Thee the form of a servant, in order to give me liberty. In order that by means of Thy clemency and wisdom man might obtain much more than he, in pride

and ignorance, had striven for without being able to attain it; whilst he, by that very act, delivered himself up into the hands of the devil, that he should be his master, whilst he should remain his captive; banished from Thy presence, sentenced by Thy wrath, the slave of his deceiver, man then took counsel of the devil how he should disobey and dishonour Thy Father's majesty and justice. Thou hast brought it to pass that that which man knew not how to accomplish has been realised; for we may truthfully say that man is indeed God, since Thou art indeed man; that all men have now faculty and license to be like God, since they are Thy brethren by lineal descent, and Thy Father calls upon them, and Thou callest upon them, to walk in Thy steps: that they should be like Thee, that they should imitate Thy obedience, and Thy righteousness, and Thy goodness; so that it may truly be said, They are the Sons of God and born of God. Wretched is the man who seeks to attain his happiness from other hands since what Thy mercy gives him is much more than his pride ever aspired to.

How I have appreciated these favours, what grateful sense I have had of them, Lord, *Thou* knowest well ; would to God that *I* had known ! for in fleeing from self I had come to Thee. For above and beyond all my wickedness and misery, what I realize and feel as to the enormity of my sins, is the very least that I have of them.

Thou, Lord, didst, ages ago, make Thyself man, for my sake, humbling Thyself so greatly to raise me ! Whilst I ever proudly aiming to be like God,—not in the way in which Thou hast taught me, but in that very same in which I lost myself,—by obeying Thy enemy, and by putting myself forward as Thy rival ; for what other was that which my pride of heart undertook but this, when I sought to rule myself by my own knowledge ; to rehabilitate myself by my own devices, and to indulge and gratify my inward perverseness and disobedience to Thee.

To others I was but a worm, for all knew my insignificance and vileness ; to myself alone, to my thoughts and to my judgment, I worshipped self as my God ; to such an extent

had I forgotten what Thou wert to me, and the degree to which Thou hadst humbled Thyself for my sake.

Thou hast descended to become man, and a new man, of the same lineage as Adam, but without Adam's sin ; for so it comported with Thy greatness, and so it comported with our justification. Thou hast taken humanity, and hast been born of a Virgin Mother, in order that Thou mightest favour us in every thing, and mightest be in every thing such a man as reason required that Thou shouldest be, who being man wast God. Thou hast called us to be new men, in order that by the privilege and favour which Thy association gave us, we should eradicate our Fathers' original sin, and should take a new origin with a new inheritance in Thee ; that as we had borne the image of the old man, and of the guilty one, we should afterwards bear and represent that of the new and of the innocent one. I, sympathising with my old nature, and satisfied with my old sins, as though they had made me happy, was content that Thou shouldest be innocent, and that I should continue to be guilty, without consider-



ing that I not only lost myself and became thereby the sufferer, but that I greatly dishonoured Thy goodness, in having come to seek me, by rejecting it and neglecting it.

The whole earth has been filled by Thy Spirit, and by the new nature which Thou hast brought into the world; very many have left slavery and the old garb to clothe themselves with the new righteousness, which Thou hast given to man. I remained in my evil course hardened, and became daily worse, more forgetful of Thee, and of what I might have been, had I but responded to the voice with which Thou hadst called me, and to the favours which Thou hadst shown me.

In order that the Devil should have no claim against me, nor slander against my righteousness, in order that the wrong and irreverence perpetrated against Thy Father's Majesty and His law might be wholly pardoned; in order that I might have greater pledges of what Thou hadst done for me, and of what Thou art to me; in order that weight of obligation might lead me, O Lord, to serve Thee; might give wings to my soul to seek Thee:

Thou hast been pleased to die for me, an infamous and cruel death, delivered up to unjust judges to be tortured and dishonoured, in the sight of the world ; all in discharge of my obligation : all to make it to be understood, how much Thou hadst my restoration at heart, by the price which it cost Thee, and which Thou didst so willingly offer for it. The Devil had no longer any ground or just pretension to accuse me ; nor the world to captivate me ; nor the flesh to enslave me ; for Thou hast conquered every thing ; Thou, in order that I might find them vanquished. The sacrifice of Thy blood made me free ; Thy Spirit and Thy grace dwelt in me, in order that the treason, which cleaved to me, through the remains of my old sins, might be unable to deceive and master me ; provided that I did not desire to deceive myself, and to allow myself to be overpowered.

My enemies having been slain by Thy death, I brought them to life again myself, that they might kill me once more. I furnished them with the sword and weapons, which Thou hadst already taken from them ; proving in every possible way that perdition was preferred by me to

the redemption which Thou hadst wrought out for me.

Forgetful of the injuries and insults borne by Thee for my sake, of the treatment which Thou didst receive at the hands of the world, of the injustice done Thee by it, of my poverty when Thou soughtest me, of the patience with which Thou didst bear it, of the clemency with which Thou didst pardon Thine enemies ; I wished so to sever myself from Thee that I might wrong every other, whilst none should injure me ; that in the denial of Thy truth, my falsehood should prevail and should be honoured ; and that my guilt should in everything be more favoured by the world, than were Thy holiness, Thy goodness, and Thy innocency.

Thou Lord didst rise again from the dead for Thy glory and for mine. Thy power has raised again Thy honour and Thy justice, and together with Thyself, those blessings have risen again, which Thou hadst brought with Thine own hands for me.

Enchanted with my profound sleep, I preferred death rather than resurrection with Thee ; to remain here, amid my enemies, rather

than to appear in Thy triumph before Thy Father.

Seated at Thy Father's right hand, a position to which Thou art entitled by Thine obedience and by the services Thou hast rendered Him, there Thou dost not forget me, there Thou art my Intercessor and Advocate to plead for me, and carest as much for me as Thou didst when on the Cross Thou didst die for my redemption. To this perception blind, to this faithfulness deaf and stupid, for these Thy favours ungrateful, I never really ceased to do evil, nor did I ever really begin to do right; I never resolved to keep my eyes fixed upon this hope, nor upon my obligation to serve Thee and to die for Thee, above all being so well assured of the recompense which Thou givest all those who seek to be Thine.

I associated myself with Thy Church; I assumed Thy name, I usurped Thy gifts as if I were truly Thine, ignoring that the body of which Thou art the head, and which has been sanctified by Thy blood, does not admit such persons as myself to its real benefits, and that by how much the more I deceived it, by so much

the more did I deceive myself. So thoroughly hardened was I, that I neither acknowledged my obligation for benefits, nor was I terrified by the chastisements and threats with which Thy justice corrects us. True fear of Thy justice never entered my heart, because I would not fathom the depths of my guilt.

Had I, Lord, but known how little need Thou hadst of my endowments ; how little the dignity of Thy household was affected by the presence or absence in it of a cipher like myself ; had I on the other hand considered my daring offences against Thy Majesty, how prejudicial I was to Thy people ; and how obstructive to the glory which they rendered Thee, I might have feared Thy judgment and have placed some limit to my sins. But I was as blind to the one as to the other. Self ignorance prevented me from knowing Thee. It was from my not knowing how to appreciate the greatness of Thy mercy that arose my inability to appreciate that of Thy judgment and of Thy justice. Hence proceeded my folly and my ruin. For when Thou soughtest me in the gracious dispensations of Thy provi-

dence, I but swelled with greater pride, and considered still less from what hand they proceeded. When Thou calledst me by chastisements, then, like a bad rebellious servant, I became still more hardened.

With such great intellectual darkness, with such great ignorance of Thee and of myself, with such great forgetfulness of Thy mercies, and such contempt for Thy punishments, my repentances could not but be very hollow; gilded with false gold; got up to be carried away by the first wind, and by the first exposure to temptation, whether suggested by the devil or my heart's lusts. Had I built upon Thee, who art a solid rock; upon the knowledge, of whom Thou art, of Thy mercy and of Thy justice, all the tempests of the world would not have been able to carry me away, for Thou wouldest have defended me. But as I built upon the sand, a handsome edifice in appearance, but without foundation, my fall was certain; for it was certain that I should be assailed. I gained no experience from my repeated falls, nor was I put more on my guard to lay better foundation for my amendment and my repent-

ance. Blessed be Thou, O Lord, and blessed be the Father who sent Thee ; who hast prevented the accomplishment of my ruin, by seeking me on all the numerous and devious paths by which I, a silly sheep, have erred and wandered from Thy fold. Since Thou hast been so long suffering with me, it is clear that Thou soughtest me. Since my enemy has not carried me off, though he has seen me so frequently in his toils, it is certain that Thou Lord didst bind his hands. He already had his prey, and I was but respited. Thou art He that hast watched over me that I should not lose myself.

Here I come to Thy judgment seat, and until Thou speak to my heart, and tell it, that Thou art its Saviour and Redeemer, I shall never be able to divest myself of the dreadful fears which proceed from my consciousness of guilt. My efforts are vain ; the greatness of the peril has brought the hollowness of my hopes to light ; the conviction that my sins are both numerous and aggravated, necessarily leads me to fear the rigour of Thy judgment : my follies are convicted ; the shortness of my life inspires my soul with great dread, because it knows

how lavishly the years have been spent, during which Thou didst bear with me that I should acknowledge and love Thee. The greater number of them, how have they passed away like smoke ! Woe is me, if I do not turn to profit the few that yet remain to me.

On the one hand, I look upon Thy goodness, and on the other, upon my sins. I learn from Thy word how greatly Thou hatest iniquity. I know, by experience, the punishment inflicted by Thy justice upon the world in token of the abhorrence in which Thou holdest sin. I contemplate hell, a dungeon prepared for the devil, and for those who imitate his deeds. As I recognise myself to be one of them, there is no peace to my flesh, nor light to my eyes, for I hourly expect death to bear me away to Thy tribunal. Notwithstanding all this so powerful is Thy mercy that it draws me to Thee. For although the demonstrations of Thy wrath against the wickedness of sin have been great, yet the demonstrations of Thy clemency to liberate men from guilt have been much greater. For Thee to chastise the world because of its offences against Thee, needs but Thy fiat ; but



to save it from ruin cost Thee, O Lord, Thy blood shed upon the cross by the very hands of those for whom Thou didst offer it and shed it. To show the rigour of Thy justice Thou wroughtest works both mighty and Godlike; to show the greatness of Thy mercy, Thou madest Thyself man; Thou tookest our weakness upon Thee; Thou didst suffer both death and dishonour to give us pledges of our pardon.

Since it is Thy will, O Lord, that I be not lost, though my ruin be self-wrought, I come to Thee; I come like the prodigal son, to seek the hospitality of Thy house, having learned by bitter experience in losses and injuries, that all those who moved me to leave Thy service are my enemies. How much soever consciousness of guilt accuses me, whatever evil I may know of myself, however much in fear I may stand of Thy judgment, I cannot cease to cherish hope that Thou purposest to pardon me; that Thou purposest to manifest Thyself graciously unto me, so that I may never again depart from Thee. Hast Thou, O Lord, not said and sworn that Thou wilt not the death of a

sinner? and that Thou hast no pleasure in man's ruin? Dost Thou not say that thou hast not come to call the righteous but sinners? not the whole, but the sick? Hast Thou not borne the chastisement of the sins of others? Hast Thou not given satisfaction for that which Thou hast not done? Is not Thy blood a sacrifice for the pardon of all the sins of the human race? Is it not true that the treasures of Thy grace avail more for my welfare, than all Adam's sin and misery for my ruin? Hast Thou not wept on my account, asking pardon for me, and Thy Father, has He not heard Thee? Who then can remove from my heart its confidence in such promises.

Had I, Lord, been the only person born into the world; or, had *I* only been a sinner, and all others righteous, Thou wouldest not have borne to die for *me*, since Thou didst not need either them or me. And such am I, and such have been my works, that they have, as it were, constrained Thy mercy, not only to die for me, but that Thou shouldest die the very same death, with all the same incidents with which Thou hast died for all, in order to magnify the

more Thy mercy and to render my pledges greater. I reckon, O Lord, and will do so truthfully, that I alone need the benefits which Thou hast distributed amongst all. Since all the sins are mine, Thy death is wholly mine. Since I have committed the sins of all, I shall boldly confide in Thee, that Thy sacrifice and Thy pardon are wholly mine, although wrought on behalf of all.

This is the day, O Lord, upon which Thou wilt more fully show Thyself to be what Thou art. This is the work in which Thou wilt glory before Thy Father and before all heaven, as being the work of Thy hands. Since Thou art a physician, and what a physician! here are wounds, such as Thou only canst heal. Here is all the destruction and all the ills that Thine enemies and mine have been able to do me. Since Thou art health, and such health as proceeds from Thy Father's hand, who gave it Thee, here are disorders given up, by all the faculty of medicine, as incurable. Since Thou art the Saviour, here is such ruin, that if Thou redeem man from it, both Thy enemies and Thy friends shall clearly know

who Thou art; since Thou art the Wisdom which came down from heaven to earth, here, Lord, Thou mayest exercise it, where there is no higher wisdom than for a man to know himself lost, when severed from Thee. Since Thou art Redemption, here is a captive subject to a thousand tyrants, who have stripped him of great riches, who keep him in a thousand torments, whilst they prepare other greater ones for him. Since Thou art Sanctification and Beauty, here is the turpitude and the hideousness of the works of the devil; remove them Lord, and it will be manifest who Thou art. Since Thou art Mercy, where can it better present itself than where there is such misery? Since Thou art the Judge to judge the world, whom canst Thou better condemn than the Devil, who persecutes me, and the accusation which he lays to my charge; and the treachery with which he deceives me?

Such am I that I need that Thou shouldest be all that Thou art; and such art Thou, O Lord, and such fulness hast Thou of everything, that with only a drop of each of them I shall have perfect relief. Were I to pause to think with

whom, of those that have offended against Thee, I might properly compare myself, I know that I should find myself to be the guiltiest and most ungrateful of sinners. Thine own people have denied Thee, but their denial was brief, whilst their confession was long; their treason was momentary, whilst their loyalty was steadily permanent. I am one of those, who, from the outset, have denied Thee; and who persecuted Thee until Thou wert nailed on the Cross; may Thy clemency not permit me to be one of those who blasphemed and derided Thee when on it, and who have never ceased to blaspheme Thee since. Let it suffice that I sold Thee, as did Judas, for a price alike petty and paltry. Let it suffice that being one of Thy household, I stole Thy property, and that my acknowledgment of mercies infinite was shewn by treachery to Thee, similar to his, but without proceeding so far further, as to lead me to eternal ruin by making me despair of Thy mercy; this latter crime, that of not confiding in Thee, being very much worse than the former, that of having sold Thee. May Thy blood, since it was shed by Thee for me, forbid

that my sins should run on; for this would be the lowest stage of ruin to me.

My sins have shown irreverence to Thy justice; they have set at nought Thy works; they have smitten Thy sacred cheek: They have crowned Thee with thorns; they have sneered derisively at Thy kingdom: they have hooted Thee through the streets; they have nailed Thee to the cross; and to Thee, when dying, did they present, as the last refreshing drink, gall and vinegar. My Redeemer, how can I deny this? What have I to expect, who am constrained to confess this by the torments of my chastisements? for the torments of my guilt and of my conscience more than suffice to constrain me to make this confession.

I used to be affected with astonishment when contemplating the malignity of those who crucified Thee, what time I was so blind that I did not view myself associated with them in that very work; and when I never considered my heart's treachery, my sinfully pernicious example, my absence of dread of Thy judgment, my contempt of Thy commandments, and my want of appreciation of Thy mercy. For had I then

known myself I should have seen the crown of thorns for Thy head, the nails to fasten Thee to the cross, and the drink which was given Thee, in my own hands, the bitterness of that cup being my indifference to the suffering which Thou didst endure for my sake. To transcend this, were to get beyond the pale of redemption. But terror of Thy judgment, Thy Father's wrath against those who despise Thee, may stop my course and constrain me to say, Thou art indeed the Son of God. Enough to be a thief and a malefactor until brought near to Thee, then indeed it is time to ask relief.

“Lord remember me, since Thou art in Thy kingdom.” I have nought to plead for my justification beyond the acknowledgment of my great guilt. I have nothing wherewith to move Thee, but the sight of my intense misery. I have no claim upon help from Thy hand, unless it spring from the fact that there is none elsewhere. On my part there is no other sacrifice, but a contrite spirit and broken heart. And I should not even have this, if Thou hadst not awakened me to the sense of my great danger.

The sacrifice which I need is that of Thy

Blood and of Thy Righteousness ; and Thou Lord wilt give it me, in order that I may offer it.

Create in me a new heart ; inwardly renew in me the spirit of true knowledge, strength to serve Thee, to conquer my enemies, to despise all my losses ; since whilst engaged in Thy service I can lose no good thing.

Convert me, O Lord, and I shall indeed be converted ; for then my repentance will be sincere ; when Thou shalt chastise me with Thy hand, Thou wilt make me stand in awe of Thy judgment, Thou wilt discover my ruin to me. Then shall I remain sincerely opposed to sin, when Thou wilt remain with me, to guard me. I have in my flesh an enemy, both puissant and real, of which I cannot rid myself. The more that I cleave to Thee, the more will the devil tempt me. The world teems with devices to enslave me. Grant me, Lord, a spirit, adequately resolute and powerful, to truly mortify the rebellion and contradiction of my flesh ; that it may indeed still dictate, but not be obeyed ; that it may assault, but not conquer. Leave such a savour of Thyself in my soul, that prime baits may appear to it as bitter, as they are.



Well do I know, my Redeemer and my Lord, that Thou hast heard me. Thou knowest my necessities much better than I understand them. My misery is more deeply felt by Thee than by me. My perils are too great for me to exaggerate, they exceed my fears. I have no reason to distrust Thee, or the mercy Thou hast promised those who allow themselves to be found of Thee. My fears and doubts are as to myself; but I trust in Thee. From Thy nature, O Lord, from what Thou dost for my salvation, I confidently believe that Thou wilt not desert me; and that Thou wilt not suffer that to be lost, through me, which is so well assured through Thee.

Grant me the joy which Thou art wont to give to those who sincerely return to Thee. Make my heart to feel the workings of Thy Mercy, the ointment with which thou art wont to anoint the wounds of Those whom Thou healest; that I may feel how sweet it is to walk bearing Thy Cross, how bitter it has been to walk in that path wherein I lost myself.

THE END.





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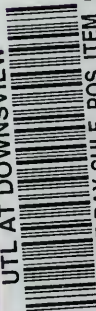
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